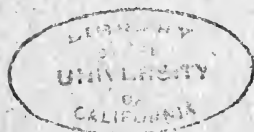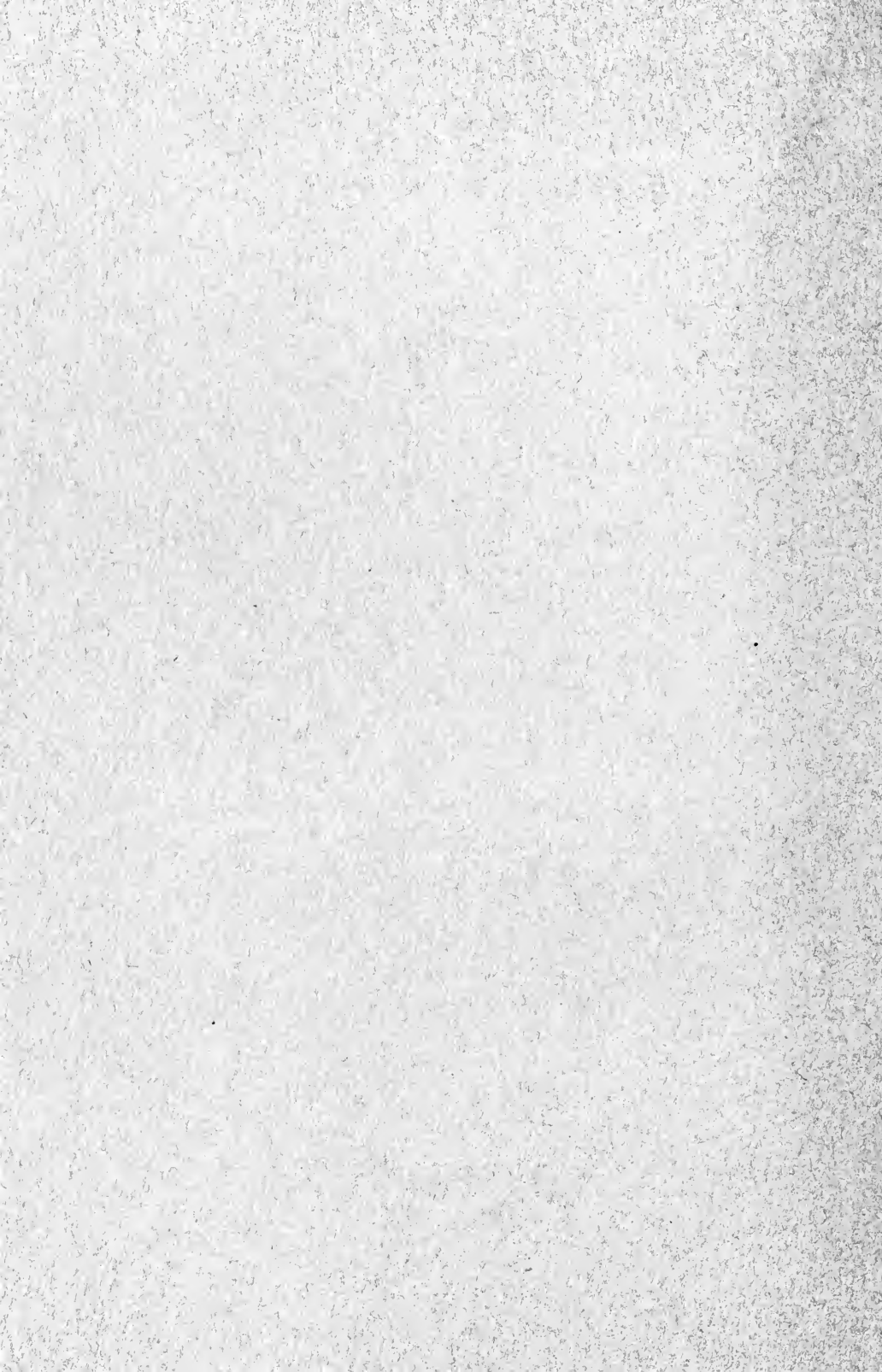# THE HISTORY OF THE CHORUS IN THE GERMAN DRAMA

BY

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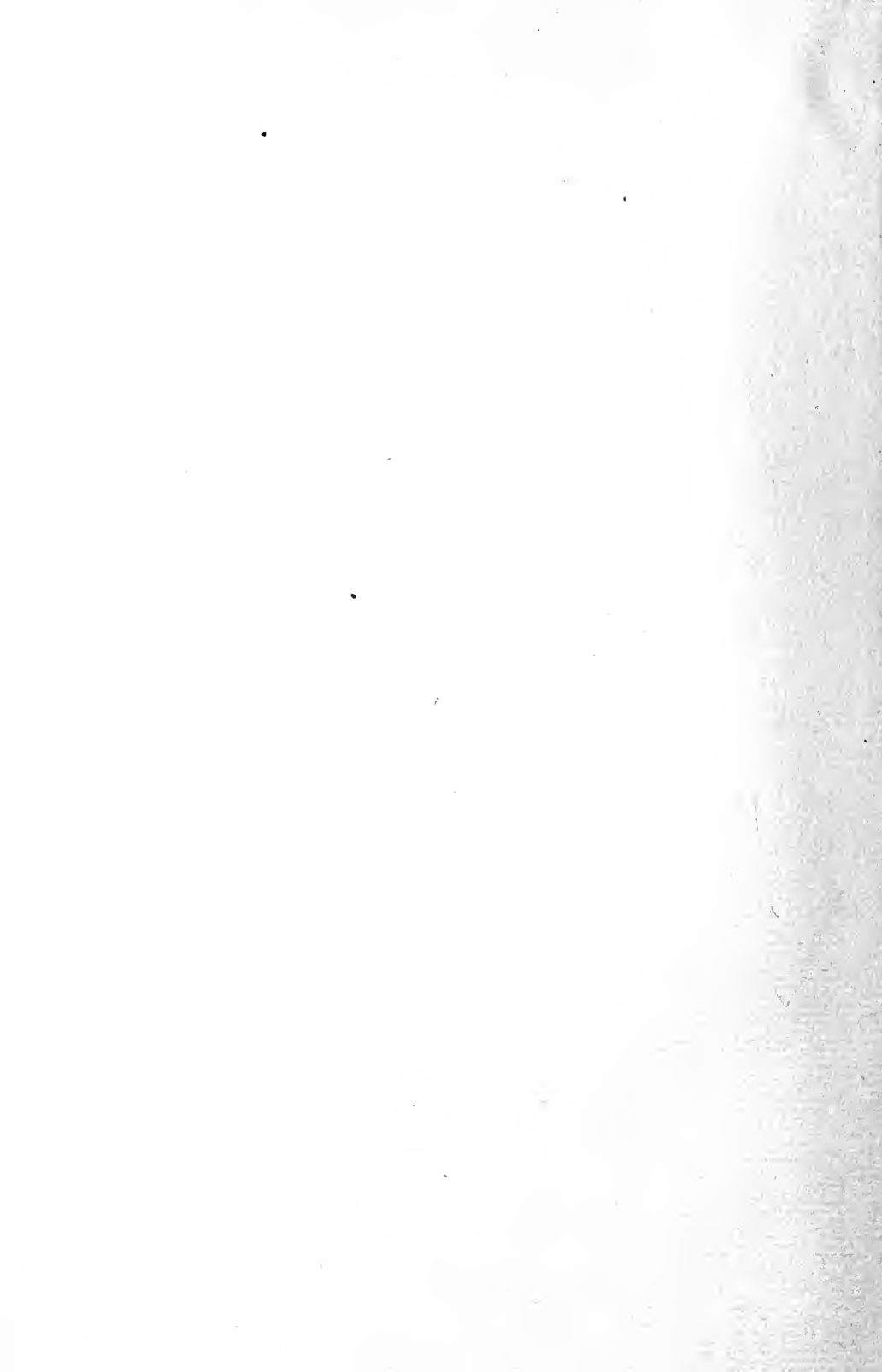
PREFACE

A chorus of some kind occurs with more or less frequency throughout the whole history of the German drama. The great mysteries or pageants of medieval Germany had their origin in a church chorus, and for a considerable period of their evolution were vitally connected with this chorus. In the sixteenth century enthusiasm for the New Learning was brought from Italy into Germany and gave rise to the era of the Latin school-comedy and the Reformation drama with choral odes between the acts. In the seventeenth century the Renaissance drama of France and Holland was introduced, and the Senecan chorus became an essential part of the drama. With this century the chorus as a recognized part of dramatic technic passed out of existence, but admiration for all things Greek led, in the eighteenth century, to a renewed interest in the chorus. Its value and significance for the drama were discussed by many dramatists, and in a few cases it was used by way of experiment. During the Romantic period the chorus, with the exception of a few sporadic instances, again disappears, only to reappear, in the middle of the nineteenth century, in a new form, that of the orchestra in the music dramas of Richard Wagner.

Although the chorus is found in every period of German literature it is not possible to trace a definite line of development. The chorus of one century did not evolve out of the chorus of the preceding century, but in each case the chorus was brought into Germany under the direct influence of some foreign literature.

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the chorus as used by the German dramatists; to point out the important differences in the method of treatment in the works of authors of different periods and under different literary conditions; and in the light of these investigations to account for the failure to make the chorus an essential part of the technic of

the drama.   This examination is limited to the original dramas in which the chorus appears.   All discussion of the chorus in translations, paraphrases, or in the various "Festspiele," "Singspiele" and operas of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has been omitted.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge my indebtedness to Professor Calvin Thomas for good counsel and helpful criticism in the writing of this dissertation.   My sincere thanks are also due to Professor William H. Carpenter, Professor William A. Hervey, and Professor Arthur F. J. Remy of the Germanic Department, and Professor James Egbert of the Department of Classical Philology for their kind interest in my work at all times.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

An exhaustive study of the history of the chorus in the German drama is impossible without taking into consideration the development which the original Greek chorus underwent in the Roman, Italian, French, Dutch and English drama before it was brought into Germany in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For, owing to the break in the history of German literature during the Thirty Years' War and the breach caused by the essentially different comprehension of the drama that resulted from the teachings of Lessing, the dramatists of one century were not influenced by those of the preceding century, but in each case the introduction of the chorus was due to an influx of foreign ideas.

Greek drama,[1] originating as it did in the primitive hymns sung by the rustic revellers at the rural festivals in honor of Dionysus, the god of wine, was in its earliest form entirely lyrical. Clad in goatskins, the inhabitants of the Attic village gathered around a rustic altar, and as they sang accompanied their songs with dances under the direction of a leader who regulated the movements of the dance. As time passed, the leader of the chorus related, during the pauses in the singing, the adventures of Dionysus, his sufferings and triumphs, and the chorus expressed in song and in appropriate movements and gestures the feelings aroused by the story. Here we have the intermediate stage in the transition from chorus to drama. Gradually the rude improvisation gave way to

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[1] My chief authorities, in dealing with this introductory phase of the subject, were A. E. Haigh, *The Attic Theatre*, Oxford, 1907; L. Campbell, *A Guide to Greek Tragedy*, London, 1891; H. E. Butler, *Post-Augustan Poetry from Seneca to Juvenal*, Oxford, 1909; A. Chassang, *Des essais dramatiques imités de l'antiquité au XIVe et au XVe siècle*, Paris, 1852. Others are referred to in the footnotes.

chants in regular lyric form and the satyric chorus developed
into the dignified chorus with strophe, antistrophe and epode
as found in later tragedy. The chants were no longer sung
by the whole group of revellers, but by a trained chorus of
fifty persons, and thus, even before the dramatic element had
begun to develop, the chorus had reached an artistic form.
The dithyrambs, or choral songs and dances, were still further
developed when an actor was introduced, and the dialogue was
no longer carried on between the leader and the whole chorus,
but between the leader and this actor.

When Æschylus began to compose his dramas Greek trage-
dy was a sacred choral performance the chief interest of which
was centered in the lyrics of the chorus; while the simple plot
sustained by the declamations of the actor, or by dialogues
between this actor and the chorus, served as the thread by
which the whole was held together. Æschylus by the intro-
duction of a second actor so far limited the choral parts as to
make them secondary to the action; for when the chorus was
no longer necessary for the representation of the plot the
center of interest was transferred from the orchestra to the
stage. But although Æschylus subordinated the chorus to
the dialogue he made no abrupt departure from the choral
drama of his predecessors. His tragedies are still in the form
of an oratorio, and the lyric odes are closely related to the
action itself; but the development of his dramatic powers
shows that from his time the history of the chorus is a history
of gradual decay.

According to Haigh[2] the increasing subordination of the
chorus takes two distinct forms. "In the first place there is a
gradual diminution in the length of the part assigned to the
chorus," and, secondly to quote Haigh again, there is appar-
ent "a constant tendency to reduce the importance of the
chorus by severing its connection with the plot." The
"Suppliants," the earliest of existing Greek tragedies, con-
sists of long choral songs and the dialogue is short and of
little importance. Moreover, the interest is centered in the
fate of the fugitive maidens, and the parts of Danaüs, the

[2] *The Attic Theatre*, p. 285.

king, and the herald merely connect the various chants of the maidens. In the "Seven against Thebes," however, a distinct advance is made in the development of the drama. The chorus has lost much of its old significance and Eteocles is the central figure; while in "Prometheus" the chorus for the first time begins to assume the conventional and subordinate rôle that it fills in Sophocles and in the early dramas of Euripides. "It was at this period," says Haigh,[3] "that Attic tragedy reached its highest perfection, and the question as to the proper place of the chorus in the plot was solved in the manner most consistent with the genius of Greek drama. The chorus is now thrown much further into the background and appears in most plays, not as a participant in the action, but merely as a sympathetic witness. While the dialogue is proceeding it follows the course of events with the keenest interest, but seldom actively interferes. In the pauses between the action it moralizes on the significance of the incidents which have just occurred. Such is its position during the middle of the (fifth) century. It has been removed from the stress and turmoil of the action into a calmer and more remote region, though it still preserves its interest in the events upon the stage." In the later plays of Euripides the development is continued. Euripides is, in a sense, the first modern dramatist, and he changes the drama and with it the chorus to suit his needs. Not able to eliminate entirely the chorus from Greek tragedy, he justifies its presence by making it the confidant of the principal actor.[4] "In the pauses between the dialogue it sings odes of a mythological character, which have only the remotest connection with the incidents of the plot."[5] That the evolution of the chorus continued along these lines is seen from the words of Aristotle[6], who complains of the practice first begun by Agathon and followed by the poets of his own time; namely of introducing "choral songs that per-

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[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 286.

[4] Cf. the chorus of sympathizing women in the *Medea*, and the scene between Phaedra, the nurse and the chorus in *Hippolytus*.

[5] Haigh, *op. cit.*, p. 286.

[6] *Poetics*, edited by S. Butcher, London, 1902, c. 18.

tain as little to the subject of the piece as to that of any other tragedy, and which are therefore sung as mere interludes." When Aristotle in writing the "Poetics" demanded "that the chorus should be regarded as one of the actors, that it should be an integral part of the whole and share in the action, in the manner not of Euripides but of Sophocles," he based his observations upon the Greek drama of the great classic period. But, in making this requirement, he failed to realize that, in the time that had elapsed between the writing of "King Oedipus" and the "Poetics," the natural evolution of the Greek drama had forced the lyric element far into the background, and that any return to the older type of drama was impossible. "We can hardly doubt," says Haigh,[7] "that the tendency already strongly marked in Euripides had been developed to its natural results, and that the tragic chorus of the later fourth century was practically excluded from all share in the conduct of the play. After the fourth century very little is known about its history. But the evidence seems to show that it was sometimes discarded even as early as the third century; and in later times this came to be more and more the ordinary custom. Even when retained, its functions were merely those of the modern band."

In the lyrical portion of the Greek drama "music, poetry and dancing were all brought into requisition."[8] The poetry was, however, in all cases the important part of the performance, while the music and dancing served to interpret and add vividness to the meaning of the words. But the dance as a feature of Greek tragedy must be distinguished from the modern dance. The Greek dance was essentially mimetic in character; its principal function being to interpret and illustrate the poetry by appropriate gesticulation. Aristotle defines the tragic dance as "an imitation of actions, characters and emotions by means of postures and rhythmical movements."[9] As a rule the motions were grave and majestic, and more like walking than dancing in the modern sense. The music of the Greek tragedy was also simple in character. The choral odes were chanted in unison, syllable after syllable,

[7] *Op. cit.*, p. 287.　　　[8] *Ibid.*, p. 311.　　　[9] *Poetics*, c. 1.

by the chorus. Both the singing and the instrumental accompaniment, which was generally limited to a single flute or harp, were always subordinate to the poetry. By the blending of poetry, dancing and music into one harmonious whole, the Greek chorus was enabled to make a threefold appeal to the audience; the appeal of beautiful poetry and profound thought, secondly the sensuous appeal of rhythmic motions explaining and intensifying the meaning of the words, and finally that of appropriate music accompanying both.

When at the close of the Punic Wars the Romans turned seriously to the study, translation and imitation of Greek literature, it was the drama to which they first gave their attention. For a brief period the writing of tragedy continued to be popular, and it became customary to give performances at all the festivals of the city.[10] But, for the Romans, the less refined pleasures of the amphitheatre, such as the horse races and the gladiatorial combats, possessed far greater fascination than the drama. With them the theatre never could become the absorbing passion that it was to the Greeks; and when, under Greek influence, they took up dramatic writing, they produced a purely exotic form of literature; plays that, in many cases, were merely translations of the Greek drama, especially of Euripides.[11] As time went on, interest in the drama died out; even in the early Empire it had given way to the mime and pantomime, and from that time drama proper existed only as closet-drama, which was written by literary men either as a pastime or for the entertainment of their friends. There is no evidence of the performance of any tragedy on the Roman stage during the "Silver Age."[12] The only extant Roman tragedies from this later period are those of Seneca, important in the history of the chorus because of

[10] For the popularity of the plays of Ennius, M. Pacuvius and L. Accius, cf. Sellar, *Roman Poets of the Republic*, Oxford, 1905, p. 120.

[11] The chorus was brought over into the early Roman drama, but it is impossible to judge from the few extant fragments anything of its treatment by the dramatists of that period. For a discussion of the chorus in Roman tragedy cf. Ribbeck, *Römische Tragödie*, pp. 637 ff.

[2] H. E. Butler, *Post-Augustan Poetry from Seneca to Juvenal*, p. 44.

the influence he exerted on the tragedy of the Renaissance. In examining the plays of Seneca we find a still further development of the chorus. Soon after the introduction of tragedy into Rome the orchestra ceased to be used for the chorus, but was given up to the Roman senators; and the chorus, thus crowded out of the orchestra, had to be brought on the stage. This innovation had an important effect upon the chorus. With the abolition of choral dances around the altar in the orchestra the drama lost its religious significance. Moreover, the nature of the chorus itself was changed. When it occupied the stage with the actors, who were no longer limited to three, there was no space for the choral dance with its rhythmic movements to the right and then to the left, as the strophe, antistrophe and epode were sung. There was, accordingly, a tendency to thrust the chorus more and more into the background, until it gradually became customary for the chorus to remain off the stage during the action and appear only between the acts. As the Roman tragedies were no longer produced but merely declaimed or recited in the presence of the friends of the dramatist, the incongruity of having the chorus comment upon events of which it was not a witness was not very apparent. But as a result the drama lost touch with the stage. In Euripides the connection between the chorus and the plot is slight, in Seneca it disappears entirely, and the rôle of the chorus is formal, artificial and ineffectual. It is used to set forth long descriptions and bombastic declamations in the style of the Alexandrian school. The chorus is no longer needed, but is kept partly as a matter of tradition, partly to supply music between the acts. The meter in the choruses of Seneca differs from that of the Greeks. There is no system of strophe, antistrophe and epode. The choral songs are generally in the form of stanzas which are repeated without variations. "The choruses in 'Agamemnon' and 'Oedipus' are composed of fragments of Horatian meter, thinly disguised by inversions and resolutions of feet."[13] The anapestic, asclepiad, sapphic and glyconic meters are also frequently employed.

[13] Butler, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

During the Italian Renaissance, Seneca exerted the predominating influence on the development first of the Latin drama and then of the vernacular drama produced under its stimulus. At a time when Latin literature was much better known than Greek the tragedies of Seneca were regarded as the highest expression of ancient dramatic art, and every drama from Mussato to Alfieri shows the effect of the Senecan technic: the long speeches, the bombastic style, the division into five acts and especially the use of the chorus.[14] But in the latter half of the fifteenth century, although Seneca was not forgotten, the return to classic literature found expression in enthusiasm for Roman comedy.[15] It was this phase of the humanistic movement that was brought into Germany in the sixteenth century and which for the entire century absorbed the attention of the German dramatists. But in Italy the enthusiasm quickly passed, and in the sixteenth century the imitation of Seneca was again taken up. Italian literature was at its height in the sixteenth century and it was due to the late Italian humanists that Seneca was accepted as the model for French, Dutch, Spanish and English drama. The imitation of Seneca became a rule of art for the French classical drama. Jodelle and Garnier, "though continually referring to the Greek masterpieces, slavishly imitated the Latin tragedy"[16] and handed the Senecan tradition down to their successors. The chorus has an important part in the French drama of the sixteenth century. To use the words of E. Faguet,[17] "On pourrait presque dire que la tragédie du XVIᵉ siècle est une œuvre lyrique; car c'est toujours la partie lyrique qui en est la partie plus soignée et souvent qui en est la meilleure."

But, at the beginning of the seventeenth century when

[14] Cf. J. Cunliffe, *The Influence of Seneca on Elizabethan Tragedy.* London, 1893, p. 7.

[15] Cf. A. Chassang, *Des essais dramatiques imités de l'antiquité au XIVᵉ et au XVᵉ siècle*, pp. 61 ff.

[16] *Ibid.*, pp. 188–189.

[17] *Histoire de la littérature française*, Paris, 1894, Vol. I, p. 456. Cf. also J. Cunliffe, *Early French Tragedy* (in *Journal of Comparative Literature*, I, 4, p. 316).

psychological development and individual interest began to play a part in tragedy, the presence of the chorus was felt to be cumbersome. The chorus as it had been taken over from the Italian drama no longer appealed to public taste, and the dramatists were forced to contrive some means of making its continual presence less awkward. It became customary to omit the chorus at the presentation of the play, and there was accordingly a tendency on the part of the poets to disregard it in the writing of the play. "Les chœurs," said Jean de Boissin,[18] in the preface to his "Didon," "y sont obmis comme superflus à la représentation." The chorus, however, continued to appear with more or less regularity until, in the middle of the seventeenth century, Corneille undertook to purify the French drama and abolished it completely. But the abolition of the chorus left a gap in the technic of the drama. Euripides, as we have seen, had to a certain extent made the chorus the confidant of the leading person; the chorus by its questions enabled the actor to set forth those inner emotions and feelings which could not be made known to the other actors and yet were necessary for the audience to know in the development of the plot. This was an important rôle of the chorus in the sixteenth century drama. After Corneille, the chorus does not again appear in the French drama;[19] but with Racine the confidant began to occupy the position formerly filled by the chorus. The confidant, who did not exist in the early drama, was not a direct outcome of the chorus, but was introduced some time after its abolition to bring about the motivation of the plot, as had previously been done by the chorus. The confidant is, therefore, in a way, a degenerate form of the chorus, and as such was taken over into the German drama by Gottsched.

Under the influence of the Renaissance drama of Italy and France, Lyly, Greene, Peele, Kyd, Marlowe and the other

[18] Quoted from E. Fournier, *Le théâtre français au XVIe et au XVIIe siècle*, Paris, 1871, p. ix.

[19] Racine's *Athalie* and *Esther* may be regarded as exceptions to the regular drama, since they were not written for the stage, but to be performed by the girls of a certain school.

Elizabethan dramatists introduced choral songs after the acts of their plays. Such a practice was, however, foreign to the English spirit and the chorus did not long remain on the stage in its original form. The chorus in Shakespeare's "Henry V" has nothing in common with the antique chorus. Instead of moralizing on the events of the preceding act it looks forward to the following act, and by giving the audience a mental picture of the events that are to take place produces "atmosphere" and, to a certain extent, takes the place of stage scenery. The old rôle of the chorus, that of ideal spectator or actor, was given to the clown or the court fool.

Through the Renaissance drama of France, Seneca was brought into Holland and affected the plays of Hooft and Vondel. In the early part of the seventeenth century the Dutch dramatists followed the Senecan technic closely, but toward the middle of the century they began to turn their attention to Greek tragedy. Seneca always remained the model for Hooft, as he was for the early plays of Vondel, but in 1639 the latter turned from Seneca to the imitation of Sophocles. Dutch literature was at its height in the middle of the seventeenth century; and when, at the close of the Thirty Years' War, the Germans again turned to literary pursuits, Gryphius and his followers took the Dutch tragedies as their models and brought into Germany the chorus as used by Hooft and Vondel.

CHAPTER II

The Chorus in the Early Church Plays

Even before the Revival of Learning and the return to classical studies we find in the German drama a chorus, similar in its early stages to the Greek chorus, [1] but in no way influenced by the antique drama. For in the Middle Ages [2] there was almost a complete break in the dramatic tradition of classical antiquity. [3] The scholars of the tenth and eleventh centuries were familiar with merely the names of the Greek dramatists, while they knew but little more of the comedies of Plautus and the tragedies of Seneca. Terence alone had escaped oblivion, but his plays were read and studied not because of their dramatic merit, but because he was regarded as a great teacher of the philosophy of life. [4] There is no evidence that his plays were ever performed in the Middle Ages, or that any attention was paid to their metrical form

[1] There is a similarity between the early development of the Greek drama and of the Christian Mysteries. They were both religious; the Greek originating in the religious festivals in honor of Dionysus, the mysteries as a part of the Easter morning service. They both had their origin in the chorus, and in the course of their evolution the lyric element was thrust into the background and the dramatic element became all-important. But they soon developed along widely different lines.

[2] Cf. W. Creizenach, *Geschichte des neueren Dramas*, Halle, 1893, Vol. I, pp. 1–2.

[3] Cf. however, J. Tunison, *Dramatic Traditions of the Dark Ages*, Chicago, 1907, pp. 123–133 and pp. 137–182; W. Lawton, *Three Dramas of Euripides*, Boston and New York, 1889, p. 4, and A.E. Haigh, *The Tragic Drama of the Greeks*, p. 3, who argue that the medieval church plays were a development of the Greek drama through an unbroken historical connection.

[4] Cf. Hroswitha von Gandersheim, whose plays were written for the sole purpose of counteracting the evil influence of Terence and of elevating the morals of their readers. In the preface to her six comedies, she says: "Sunt etiam alii—qui licet alia gentilium spernant, Terentii tamen figmenta frequentius lectitant, et, dum dulcedine sermonis delectantur, nefandarum notitia rerum maculantur. Unde ego, *clamor validus Gandeshemensis*,

or dramatic technic.[5] When, accordingly, the priests attempted to bring the teachings of the Catholic church more clearly before the minds of the unlettered people who could not understand Latin, by representing the ritual in dramatic form, they were ignorant of even the most elementary dramatic laws; and the crude, formless pageants that evolved out of these simple beginnings were an unconscious and natural product of the needs of the time.[6] These medieval plays had their origin in a brief responsive chant that can be traced back to the tenth century.[7] This chant, which is the nucleus of all the later Easter plays, consists of the following sentences, sung alternately by the angels of the Resurrection and the women who visit the grave:[8]

1 Quem queritis in sepulchro, o christicole?
2 Jesum Nazarenum crucifixum, o caelicole.
3 Non est hic, surrexit sicut praedixerat, ite, nuntiate, quia surrexit de sepulchro.
4 Surrexit dominus de sepulchro, qui pro nobis pependit in ligno.

After the third responsory and before the Te Deum of the early mass on Easter Sunday morning, the choir[9] walked in solemn procession to a wooden structure which was built before

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non recusavi illum imitari dictando, quem alii colunt legendo; quo, eodem dictationis genere, quo turpia lascivarum incesta feminarum recitabantur, laudabilis sacrarum castimonia virginum, juxta mei facultatem ingenioli, celebraretur." (In Migne, J. P., ed. Patrologiae cursus completus. . . . series Latina, 1879, Vol. 137, col. 939–1196, p. 971.)

[5] One illustration of the confusion with regard to the drama in the Middle Ages is the idea that one actor recited the whole play, while the others did the acting; "dass ein einziger Recitator das ganze Stück mit Rede und Gegenrede vortrug und dass dazu mehrere stumme Darsteller die Empfindungen der einzelnen Personen des Dramas durch Gebärdenspiel ausdrückten." (Creizenach, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 5.)

[6] The religious drama arose about the tenth century. Cf. Creizenach, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 48.

[7] Cf. R. Froning, Das Drama des Mittelalters, Stuttgart, 1891, Vol. I (vol. 14 of Kürschner's Deutsche Nationalliteratur).

[8] The text is from Froning, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 13.

[9] These Easter services were always performed by priests.

the principal altar of the church and represented the tomb of Christ. There it separated into two parts, one singing the words of the three Marys and the other those of the two angels. In the course of time it became customary for the choir to remain in its place and for two groups to walk toward the grave and sing alternately the four Latin sentences of the ritual. These groups in turn gave way to individuals, and the chant was sung by three members of one group, personating the three Marys, and by two of the other, personating the angels. The latter took their position near the grave, while the former advanced only a short distance from the chorus.[10] When the chant was finished the women returned to the chorus, announced the news with the words "surrexit dominus de sepulchro," and the performance ended with a Te Deum sung by the chorus.

A wish to acquaint the people still further with the meaning of the services led to the introduction of more sentences from the liturgy. The first expansion[11] was the invitation to the women to come and see the place where the Lord lay.[12] As time passed new elements were added and other actors were taken from the chorus. The mourning women had been told to report the news to the disciples. Accordingly, Peter and John were introduced,[13] although in most cases they were thought of together as "discipuli." While the chorus sang the "Currebant duo simul" of the liturgy the apostles hastened to the grave, were convinced of the Resurrection, and returned with the words "Cernitis, o socii." The women and the angels had been regarded as groups, but with the introduction of Peter and John we get a hint of the individualization of character that was to be more clearly brought out in the further development of the Easter services.[14] The next change

[10] In the Easter services the rôle of chorus is taken by the choir, and I shall use the term chorus when referring to the choir.

[11] Cf. Osterfeier, Strassburg I (Antiphonar, 1200), text in Froning, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 14.

[12] "Venite et videte locum ubi positus erat dominus."

[13] Cf. Osterfeier, Augsburg I, text in Froning, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p.16.

[14] The Germans distinguish between Osterfeier and Osterspiel. It seems advisable to do the same in this discussion, and I shall refer to Osterfeier as Easter service and Osterspiel as Easter play.

was that the women, with the exception of Mary Magdalene, left the tomb after they had been told of the Resurrection. She however remained, and a dialogue ensued between her and Christ, whom she mistook for the gardener. In this dialogue we have for the first time characters that stand out as distinct and independent individuals.[15]

With the scene between Christ and Mary Magdalene the evolution of the Easter service as a part of the Easter morning mass ceases.[16] What was the effect of this development on the chorus? In the first place it had been deprived of all participation in the action. The liturgy, which had originally been sung by the whole chorus, was soon sung by selected members, by the groups of mourning women and angels. Thus we have a main chorus which stands aloof from the action, and two secondary choruses[17] which play an active rôle in it. These minor choruses, however, did not long hold the stage. Individual characters such as Peter and John were introduced from the principal chorus, and, although the original liturgical sentences continued to be sung by the groups, the members of these groups gradually came to be thought of as distinct personages;[18] and new parts, when added, were generally assigned to definite characters.

But even though all dramatic action was taken from the original chorus it was not entirely forced into the background. It still existed as the framework about which the drama was developed. Up to this time no attention had been paid to even the most elementary dramatic requirements, and when the priests had wished to lengthen the simple Easter services they went to the ritual for their material. These new liturgical sentences were generally sung by the chorus, while the characters performed the actions suggested by the words. It was

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[15] Cf. Osterfeier, Nürnberg II (Antiphonar, 13 Jahrh.), text in Froning, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 17.

[16] These three scenes are broadened and elaborated by the introduction of many church songs and hymns, but no new scenes are added.

[17] The term "chorus" may be understood to mean any group of two or more persons who sing together.

[18] Cf. the scene between Christ and Mary Magdalene.

always so, first the liturgical sentences and then the actions based upon them.[19] In these sentences, which might almost be regarded as stage directions, the chorus tells what is going to take place, and the action is carried on as it is described. So, in spite of the fact that every additional element brought the individual more and more into prominence, and at the same time made the chorus of little significance in the rôle of actor, the lyric elements continued to be very important. The Easter services always remained oratorios in character. This is seen by the fact that the women sing as they walk to the grave: "Et dicebant ad invicem 'Quis revolvet nobis lapidem ab hostio monumenti?'", singing "dicebant" as if it were part of the rôle.[20] In some of the later plays, the chorus, without leaving its original place, does to a certain extent take part in the action, in that, when the women are returning from the grave, it frequently asks them what they have seen, and then ensues a dialogue between the women and the chorus.[21]

An idea of the rôle played by the chorus in the later Easter services may be obtained by examining the "Nürnberg Oster-feier" of the thirteenth century.[22] After the third responsory, the chorus sings: "Maria Magdalena et alia Maria ferebant diluculo aromata, dominum querentes in monumento." The three Marys then advance from the chorus carrying spices and incense and approach the tomb, singing first a hymn and afterward the words "Quis revolvet nobis ab ostio lapidem?" The conversation at the grave between the women and the angels takes place exactly as in the earlier performances. When it is finished two of the women return to the chorus, leaving Mary Magdalene weeping at the sepulchre. In the meantime the chorus sings "Maria plorans ad monumentum." This is followed by the words of Mary "Heu redemptio Israhel, ut qui mortem sustinuit," to which the chorus an-

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[19] This is illustrated later.

[20] Cf. Osterfeier, Bamberg I, text in C. Lange, *Die lateinischen Oster-feiern*, München, 1887, p. 29.

[21] Cf. Trier Osterfeier, "quibus versibus sic cantatis chorus cantet: Dic nobis, Maria, quid vidisti in via?" (text in Froning, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 15).

[22] The text is from Froning, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 17.

swers "Non sufficiens sibi." Christ then appears and the scene between Him and Mary Magdalene takes place. Mary returns to the chorus, and in answer to the question of the disciples, "Dic nobis Maria,"[23] she tells of the Resurrection; after which the chorus sings: "Credendum est magis soli Marie veraci quam Iudeorum turbe fallaci." Mary sings, "Scio Christum surrexisse a mortuis vere," and the chorus, "Tu nobis, victor rex, miserere." Peter and John then run to the tomb and, as they are going, the chorus sings: "Currebant duo simul et ille alius discipulus precucurrit cicius Petro et venit prior ad monumentum, alleluia." The disciples show the linen and the napkin to the chorus, with the words, "Cernitis, o socii, ecce linteamina et sudarium." They return to the chorus singing "Surrexit enim, sicut dixit, dominus," and the performance ends with the "Te Deum laudamus" sung by the whole chorus.

From this analysis it may be seen that the original chorus, though not directly taking part in the performance, is nevertheless important because, by the singing of the liturgical sentences, it controls and directs the action.[24] There is very little direct conversation between it and the actors, but constituting, as it does, the central point about which the action revolves, and from which the characters depart and to which they return, it is indirectly kept before the eyes of the congregation. The rôle of the secondary choruses remains unchanged, but most of the new parts are taken by definite characters.

With the introduction of the scene between Mary Magdalene and Christ the priests felt that the Easter services could not be developed further if they were to be a part of the Easter morning mass. But dramatic expansion was inevitable. The people eagerly demanded more and more action, until at length the clergy were compelled to discontinue the Easter services as a part of the mass and give them as a separate service. But, even then, the elements that could be introduced within the church were naturally of a limited

[23] In most plays this is sung by the chorus.
[24] In this short play it sings four sentences from the ritual.

character; sentences from the ritual, scenes from the Gospels and church hymns. Latin was still used and everything was sung. The people were, however, not long satisfied with this; what they wanted was lively action, fun, dramatic realism and, above all, the German language.[25] As long as the plays remained in the church these things were impossible; but the demand was so persistent that the priests were finally forced to take the plays out of the church, and from that time they were performed in the market-place. Here many secular elements were introduced, together with much that was coarse and vulgar. Many folk-songs were added and the comic scenes were elaborated to such an extent that they were out of proportion to the rest of the drama. At the same time the German language was introduced, not to take the place of the Latin which, in the church plays, was never omitted, but in the form of translations or rather paraphrases and amplifications of the original. We frequently find a long German passage or even a whole scene in explanation of a short Latin sentence; and later, German sentences are introduced independently of the Latin. Thus the German drama grew up, as it were, about the original Latin sentences, and in the course of time the German elements became all-important.

The transference of the Easter play from the church to the market-place, with the resultant growth of secular elements and the increase of dramatic action, naturally had its effect upon the chorus. The connection between the chorus and the action had long been purely superficial. The chorus was no longer needed to explain the action, and when the plays ceased to be performed in the church it was possible to break away from the old formal liturgical drama and the chorus was omitted entirely. Even in the Easter services the rôle of the chorus had been curtailed by the groups, as that of the groups was later by the individual characters; and now, when all restraint of development was removed, it was the individual character in whom the dramatist was interested. But although the chorus does not appear certain of its functions

[25] For the influence of the "clerici vagantes" upon the increasing secularity of the plays, cf. Froning, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 25–27.
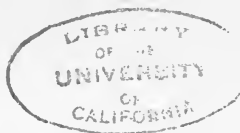
are retained and are bestowed upon the various actors. Some
of the liturgical sentences that had been sung by the chorus
were assigned to the actors themselves. Two sentences sung
in the Easter services by the chorus and in the Easter plays
by Peter and John will serve as illustration. After Mary
Magdalene announces the Resurrection the chorus sings
"Credendum est magis soli Marie veraci quam Iudeorum
turbe fallaci";[26] and while the apostles are running to the
grave it sings: "Currebant duo simul et ille alius discipulus
precucurrit cicius Petro et venit prior ad monumentum,
alleluia."[27] In the "Innsbruck Easterplay"[28] the stage
direction reads as follows: "Petrus et Johannes recedunt et
cantant 'Credendum est magis soli Marie' etc., et corruunt
ante sepulchrum et cantant 'Currebant duo simul et ille alius
discipulus'"; and in the "Sterzing Easterplay"[29] "Tunc
Petrus et Johannes currunt ad monumentum cantando 'Cur-
rebant duo simul.'" Other liturgical sentences, however,
had little significance beyond that of stage directions sung by
the chorus, and they seem to have been given up entirely.
Many Easter services begin with the sentence: "Maria Mag-
dalena et alia Maria ferebant diluculo aromata, dominum
querentes in monumento." This does not appear in the
Easter plays, nor does "Maria plorans ad monumentum,"
another much-used sentence. In the absence of the chorus
it became customary for the actors to address the people.[30]

In the early Easter plays the Latin was sung by groups, as
it had been in the Easter services, while the German para-
phrases were in almost every case spoken by definite charac-
ters.[31] In the new portions such as the merchant-scenes, all
the rôles were taken by individuals;[32] save when Latin from

[26] Cf. Trier Osterfeier, *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 15.
[27] Cf. Augsburg Osterfeier, *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 16; cf. also Nürnberg Osterfeier,
which contains both sentences. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 17.
[28] *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 96.   [29] *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 103.
[30] Cf. Sterzinger Osterspiel: "Petrus dicit ad populum"; "Johannes dicit
ad populum." (Text in A. Pichler, *Über das Drama des Mittelalters in
Tirol*, Innsbruck, 1850, p. 167).   [31] *Ibid.*, p. 165.
[32] Cf. Wolfenbüttler Osterspiel, text in Froning, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 60–62;
also Erlauer Spiel, *ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 62–94.

the ritual was introduced, in which case the Latin was sung by groups.[33]

But while there was a tendency to put the action more and more into the hands of individuals, there was also a parallel tendency to bring on the stage the groups with which the individuals were associated in the Bible. Consequently, with the lengthening of the Easter plays to include the watch at the grave and Christ's descent into hell, many new groups were added; as the soldiers of Pilate at the tomb, the angels who awaken Christ and the souls imprisoned in hell. It was customary for all the actors to march upon the stage in solemn procession before the play began and to remain there during the performance. Thus there was always a great mass of actors on the stage, who for convenience grouped themselves about the principal actors. When, in the course of this dramatic epic, one event after the other was enacted, each leading character, as he came to the front, brought with him his particular group, and each group in its turn played the rôle of the chorus; as chorus of angels, of devils, of souls, etc.[34] These groups were continually changing during the process of the action, and consequently we never find one definite chorus throughout the play.

Under the influence of the Easter plays arose the Passion plays,[35] in which the choral groups are even more prominent; for, inasmuch as the action of these plays generally included the principal events in the life of Christ from His baptism to His burial, a greater opportunity was given for the introduction of groups; as followers of John the Baptist, apostles of Christ, angels, wicked Jews, prophets, etc. These choral groups were more vitally connected with the drama than was the original chorus, for they took an active part, as it had not done. Thus it happens that in the later Easter and Passion

[33] Cf. Redentiner Osterspiel, where, in the scene in which Christ releases the souls imprisoned in hell, are found directions such as: "Et cantant anime," "Et ducit animas, que cantant." (*Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 123–198.)

[34] These various choral groups remained distinct throughout the play.

[35] Although some Passion plays are older than the Easter plays, they became popular in the fifteenth century when the development of the Easter play began to decline.

plays, although all the important rôles are played by individuals, the groups or minor choruses again come into prominence, under the necessity of providing room upon the stage for all the actors.[36]

In the later plays there is apparent a tendency to unite all the minor choruses into one large chorus. Hints of this tendency to return to the original chorus are found in the "Redentin Easter Play"[37] in a chorus sung by the combined groups. In the "Frankfurter Dirigierrolle"[38] it is quite usual to find, in addition to choral songs by groups, stage directions such as:[39] "persone universaliter cantabunt versiculum hunc," "persone quoque universaliter cantabunt" or "hic persone cantabunt"; and in the "Tirol-Lichtmesspiel"[40] sentences such as: "tunc omnes canunt simul," "tunc canunt omnes" or "simul omnibus cantantibus." In the Alsfeld Passion play[41] a number of verses are undoubtedly sung by the united choruses; for, inasmuch as these verses are practically the same as those sung by the "persone universaliter" of the "Frankfurter Dirigierrolle," which served as the model for this play, the simple term "chorus" which is always used must refer to the new composite chorus. The duties of this new chorus are even more limited than were those of the original chorus. It takes no part in the action; in fact it does little more than sing Latin hymns and stereotyped phrases. In the course of development a new character had been added, the "proclamator," whose duty was to speak the prologue and the epilogue, to give the contents and purpose of the play and to set forth the moral.[42] Thus it happened that the "procla-

[36] It is impossible to ascertain whether the chorus occupied a specific place on the stage. Cf. R. Heinzel, *Beschreibung des geistlichen Schauspiels*, Hamburg, 1898, p. 26.

[37] Cf. Froning, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 146, where the following stage direction is found, "chorus cantat: 'Sanctorum populus'."

[38] The text is from Froning, *op. cit.*, Vol. II.

[39] Such stage directions occur fourteen times in this play.

[40] Cf. Pichler, *op. cit.*, pp. 101 and 110.

[41] The text is from Froning, *op, cit.*, Vol. III.

[42] Such a rôle is played by St. Augustine in the "Frankfurt Passion Play.'

mator" had to a certain extent assumed some of the duties of the original chorus, and the old liturgical sentences, which had dwindled down to stage directions and had disappeared when the chorus was omitted, were not brought back. Those liturgical sentences, however, that had been assigned to the individual actors were again sung by the chorus; thus showing that there was a feeling of relationship between this and the old chorus.

No attempt to trace the evolution of the chorus in the great medieval pageants can be very satisfactory.[43] Although there is apparent a gradual subordination of the lyric elements to the dramatic, the rôle actually played by the chorus is confused and uncertain. The reason is obvious. The authors of the religious dramas were priests of little or no creative genius, who wrote not for the sake of producing great plays, but that they might bring clearly before the eyes of the people the significance of the teachings of the church. Everything had to be represented on the stage, nothing was left to the imagination; hence were evolved great dramatic epics, the performance of which lasted several days and employed a multitude of actors.[44] In writing these plays the dramatists did not hesitate to utilize the plays of their predecessors;[45] either copying them without change[46] or working them over and amplifying them. Even in the latter case the original form was always apparent. Familiar portions of the pieces, as formulae, hymns and ritual sentences, were always introduced just as they had existed in the early Easter celebrations. Thus the choral songs, which always remained unaltered even when the plays in which they were found were incorporated into the longer plays, soon became typical and stereotyped. For

[43] The history of the dramatic services proves that the chronological order of the monuments does not show their internal development. Cf. Creizenach, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 58.

[44] Contrast the Greek method of narration by the messenger, where the whole plot was familiar to the audience before presentation.

[45] Cf. L. Wirth, *Die Oster-und Passionsspiele bis zum XVI. Jahrhundert*, Halle, 1889, p. 228.

[46] The author of the Alsfeld Passion play copied almost all of the Trierer Marienklage.

this reason one cannot really speak of the evolution of the chorus in the religious drama. The drama developed out of the chorus, but the chorus itself remained unchanged, and even in the latest German plays is found in its original form. Moreover, the development of the plays depended to a great extent upon the individuality of the author. If he was of a religious temperament, as was the writer of the "Alsfeld Passion play," a great many liturgical sentences and hymns would be introduced; but if he preferred realism and emphasized such scenes as the "Teufelspiel" or the merchant-scenes, which had no liturgical foundation, the chorus played little or no part. Furthermore, any attempt at originality on the part of the author was naturally a movement away from the liturgical drama and consequently a movement away from the chorus. Thus it happens that in some of the later plays the chorus is prominent, while in others it does not appear at all.

We have seen from the preceding examination that the religious drama had its origin in the old church choir, or chorus, that the chorus soon gave way to the smaller choruses or groups, and these in turn to the individual characters. Even while the drama was still a part of the Easter morning mass the chorus had ceased to take part in the action, and its duties were confined to the singing of liturgical sentences or to dialogue with the actors. When, under the continual demand for more realism and the German language, the plays were transferred from the church to the market-place, the original chorus was omitted, and the liturgical sentences which it had previously sung were either discarded or assigned to individual actors. The principal rôles were now taken by distinct characters, the secondary groups still singing their original songs. With the growth of the plays and the introduction of new characters, the leading personages brought on the stage with them the characters with whom they were associated in the Bible, and the groups again became an important factor in the development of the action. Later these groups were united into one composite chorus, which, though bearing a certain resemblance to the original chorus, must be sharply

distinguished from it. For certain functions of the old chorus had been assumed by the "proclamator," who had been added in the course of development. These functions were not given to the new composite chorus, but its duty was confined to the singing of hymns and of such liturgical sentences as had been retained. But in the meantime the German elements had been developed and elaborated to such an extent that the Latin sentences appear only in scattered instances throughout the drama. Consequently the composite chorus appears only as an anomaly and never becomes a regular part of the dramatic technic.

CHAPTER III

The Chorus under the Influence of the Latin Comedy

In order that the character of the chorus in the drama of the sixteenth century may be clearly understood, it is first necessary to give a brief summary of the radical changes that took place in the drama as a whole during this period. At the end of the fifteenth century German literature was at a low ebb. It was a period of moral, religious and social disintegration, and the literature of the period naturally reflected this condition; it was vulgar, coarse, satiric, in the worst sense plebeian. The religious drama had developed into a great unwieldy folk-drama; and in the course of its evolution so much that was rude and repulsive had been introduced that the plays fell into disrepute. For some time there had been a tendency to treat religion more seriously, and at the beginning of the sixteenth century the old religious drama passed out of existence. The Shrove-tide plays which were the only other type of drama in this period, were crude, vulgar farces, in doggerel verse and generally more or less satiric in character. In the sixteenth century the type was greatly improved by Hans Sachs, who wrote no less than eighty-five Shrove-tide plays. His technic is very simple. There is no division into acts and scenes, and the characters come and go as it suits his pleasure. The Shrove-tide plays continued to flourish throughout the sixteenth century, but early in the seventeenth they too were given up.

Such were the conditions in Germany when a movement arose which was to produce a new drama based on classic models; a drama which, under the influence of the Reformation, was to give the vernacular drama a stricter and more regular form, and then work hand in hand with this popular drama in furthering the teachings of Luther. This movement was

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begun in Germany by the German students who had studied
at Padua, Rome and Bologna, and who had brought back with
them the enthusiasm for Latin literature which was at that
time widespread in Italy. Under the influence of Italian
humanism the Roman comedies were everywhere held in the
highest esteem. Not content with studying and interpreting
them, the German humanists had them performed at the
universities, and gradually the schoolmasters began to write
original Latin dramas based on the classic comedies, for the
sole purpose of facilitating the study of Latin. These plays
were performed by the students at the schools and universities.
But the early humanists had little conception of dramatic
technic, for their plays are very primitive in form.[1] They are
either little more than a succession of dialogues[2] in prose, or
else elaborate court pageants, consisting of five loosely con-
nected acts held together by choral songs, partly in prose, and
partly in verse; such as were written by Locher and Celtis,
the most important of the early humanists.[3]

The only noteworthy exception is the "Scaenica progymnas-
mata" or "Henno" (1497) of Reuchlin, a peasant-comedy based
on the well-known French farce "Maître Pathelin."[4] This
play was epoch-making, not only because it was the first
successful attempt on the part of a German humanist to re-
produce the spirit as well as the form of the old Roman come-
dies, but also because it was the first instance of the introduc-

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[1] Cf. Creizenach, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 31.

[2] These plays might be characterized by the title which Heinrich Bebe
(1501) gives his play: *Comœdia (vel potius dialogus.)*

[3] The court pageants, although they contain choral songs, do not deserve
a close investigation, for they died out without further development and
without exerting the slightest influence on the German drama. They
were not translated into German, but remained, as they were intended to
be, a purely scholastic type of literature. "The Latin drama which was
to attain high perfection in Germany during the sixteenth century produced
only its forerunners in the humanistic period." (L. Geiger, *Renaissance und
Humanismus in Italien und Deutschland*, Berlin, 1882, p. 473).

[4] It was impossible to obtain the text of Reuchlin's comedy. I have,
therefore, been compelled to follow the detailed analysis of the play given
by Creizenach, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 43 ff.

tion of the chorus into the New Latin comedy. The play was performed January 31, 1497, by the students at Heidelberg, where it was received with great enthusiasm. But in spite of his popularity Reuchlin had no immediate followers. For nearly half a century, the pageants and dialogues continued to be the favorite form of literature among the humanists; and the "Henno" seems to have remained without effect until 1535. In that year the Dutch humanist Georgius Macropedius produced his "Aluta" and his "Rebelles,"[5] in the preface to which he says that it was Reuchlin who first inspired him to write.[6]

At this time there existed in Switzerland a bitterly satiric vernacular drama, parallel to but entirely independent of the scholastic drama.[7] The authors of this crude but powerful "Tendenzdrama" were stern, serious men who were unacquainted with the new literary movement and used the old Shrove-tide type as a means of expressing their dissatisfaction with the church and the clergy. Written by burghers and performed in the market-places on Sundays by burghers, these plays were in every sense folk-dramas. As in the old church drama, every thing was represented and the plays developed until they sometimes took two days to perform and employed hundreds of characters. Then came the Reformation, forcing into the background by the very vehemence of its advance all that could not serve its purpose. The religious strife became the one overwhelming event of the time. But with Luther's translation of the Bible and his words[8] in approval of the drama there sprang up a widespread

[5] The humanistic plays, written as they were in Latin, could be read with equal facility by the people of every country and hence served as models in the writing of later plays.

[6] "Is (Reuchlin) mihi primus, ut verum fatear, ansam scribendi dedit, is me primus excitavit. Si praeter eum alii ante me scripserint, nescio; hoc scio, quod alios non viderim." (Text in the *Lateinische Litteraturdenkmäler des XV. und XVI. Jahrhunderts*, edited by J. Bolte, Berlin, 1897, Vol. 13.)

[7] Cf. *Die Totenfresser* of P. Gengenbach, and *Der Ablasskrämer* of Nicklaus Manuel.

[8] Cf. Preface to the Book of Judith and to the Book of Tobit,—quoted

enthusiasm for dramatic productions. From all parts of Germany and Switzerland came the impulse to use the stage as a weapon of the Reformation, and to write plays on subjects taken from the Old and the New Testament. This Biblical drama was not an affair of the burgher class exclusively, but, in Germany especially, the clergy and the schoolmasters wrote plays to be performed by the students. Thus we have two types of vernacular drama, one written by the unlearned and performed in the market-places; the other written by the schoolmasters and the clergy and performed in the schools. These schoolmasters had studied the Roman comedies and they followed classic models in the composition of the popular drama. The loose continuity of the plays was divided into what might be called acts, although at first the division into three or five parts was purely artificial and did not in the least depend upon the inner motivation or development of the plot. At first the plays were not actually divided into acts, but the parts were separated by choruses in short strophes, which at one time resemble Latin odes and at another medieval hymns. In 1527 appeared "Der verlorne Sohn" by Burkard Waldis,[9] the oldest Protestant drama based upon a Biblical story and the first German drama written under the influence of the classic tradition. In 1535 the "Susanna" of Paul Rebhun[10] was produced. Under the influence of the Reformation the satiric drama of Switzerland gave way to the Biblical drama in classic form, and in 1532 appeared the "Fünferlei Betrachtnisse" of Johannes Kolross[11] and the "Susanna" of Sixt Birck.[12] These plays were followed by those of Boltz along parallel lines.

Even the Latin drama was not unaffected by the Reforma-

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by H. Holstein, *Die Reformation im Spiegelbilde der dramatischen Litteratur des 16. Jahrhunderts*, Halle, 1886, p. 20. (In *Schriften des Vereins für Reformationsgeschichte*, Vols. 14–15.)

[9] Edited by Froning. (In Kürschner's *Deutsche Nationalliteratur*, Vol. 22.)

[10] Edited by J. Tittmann, *Schauspiele aus dem sechzehnten Jahrhundert*, Leipzig, 1868, Vol. II.

[11] Text in *Schweizerische Schauspiele des 16. Jahrhunderts*, edited by J. Bächtold, Zürich, 1890, Vol. I.

[12] *Ibid.*, Vol. II.

tion. Under its influence the dialogues and the pageants gave
way to a new type of drama, more or less in the form of the
old Roman comedies, but treating subjects taken either from
contemporary life or from the Scriptures. This new tendency
had its origin in Holland. The first dramatist to employ a
Biblical subject in the style of Terence and Plautus was the
Dutch humanist Gnapheus, who in 1529 produced the most
famous and the best drama on the subject of the Prodigal
Son, "Acolastus sive de filio prodigo."[13] In the prologue,
Gnapheus says that he was influenced by Terence in the
treatment of the parable and refers to himself as the first
who dared to use a Biblical subject in the manner of the Roman
comedy writers. The moral at the end is characteristic of
the Latin school-drama of the Reformation, for now the drama
was intended not merely to drill the students in colloquial
Latin, but also to serve as a means of teaching and spreading
the ideas of the Reformation. This play attained great popu-
larity in Holland, and was brought into Italy, England and
Germany. In Germany and Switzerland it met with great
success, owing to the fact that in these places the indigenous
Biblical drama was just then absorbing the interest of all the
people.[14] The "Acolastus" was immediately translated into
German that it might be understood by those who did not
know Latin. The next year Sixt Birck rewrote his "Susan-
na" (1537) in Latin,[15] and in the prologue to this version
referred to the "Acolastus" in a way which implies that it
was perfectly familiar to the audience. Birck was the first
German to produce a Latin Biblical drama, but his example
was quickly followed, and it soon became customary for the
authors of the vernacular drama either to translate the doggerel
verse into Latin or to write entirely new plays in this language.

Under the influence of the Dutch school the German

[13] Edited by J. Bolte in *Lateinische Litteraturdenkmäler des XV. und
XVI. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin, 1891, Vol. I. This play does not, however,
contain a chorus.

[14] The Latin Biblical drama was ushered into Germany by the perform-
ance of *Acolastus*, in 1536.

[15] Edited by J. Bolte, *op. cit.*, Vol. 8.

humanists abandoned the pageants and dialogues and turned to the Latin Biblical drama, which soon became the only type written by them. Thus the two literary currents ran side by side, exerting a mutual influence. The same subjects were treated and the same dramatists frequently wrote both in Latin and in German. In spite of their religious significance the Biblical plays never lost their pedagogic character, and at various times during the year the schoolboys were compelled to give a performance in Latin before the school authorities, to show their facility in the language, and then one in German in the town-hall or in the market-place before the assembled populace, that "beid gelert und ungelert, Burger, Bawr und alle man den profectum wachs und zunemmen der Schulen sehen und erfaren. Auch ein jeder deste mehr lust, die seinen zur Schulen zu halten, haben muge, wirt solche Comedien ferner offentlich unter dem freien Himmel für jederman aus unser schulen agiret und gespilet."[16] Although this translating of German plays into Latin or of Latin into German naturally led to an almost universal adoption of the Roman technic, the Biblical school-drama of the sixteenth century is a distinct type, for in it is found an element which was not derived from the old Roman comedies, and that is the introduction of the chorus between the acts.

Here an important question arises as to why the chorus was used in the German drama of the sixteenth century. The first instance of the chorus is in the "Henno,"[17] a New Latin comedy by Reuchlin (1497). In writing his play Reuchlin followed the dramatic form of Terence. But this does not, however, explain the introduction of the chorus, for it is not used in the comedies of Terence or Plautus;[18] nor is there any case of the chorus either in the Italian comedy modeled upon

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[16] Cf. Baumgarten, *Juditium Solomonis*, 1561, quoted by K. Goedeke, *Grundriss zur Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung*, Dresden, Vol. II, p. 356.

[17] This play was later worked over by Hans Sachs, who omitted the chorus.

[18] Cf. *Rudens* of Plautus, Act II, Sc. 1, for the only case of the chorus in Roman comedy. This chorus of fifteen lines is recited by a group of fishermen who do not appear again in the play.

them or in the French farce "Maître Pathelin," the source of
Reuchlin's play.   But although Reuchlin nowhere states defi-
nitely the reason for this innovation, there is a reference in his
commentary[19] that seems to point clearly to Greek influence;
for in this passage he speaks of his play as "Comoedia secundae
aetatis juxta Diomedem."   Diomedes[20] in turn quotes Sueto-
nius who in his "De poetis" describes the chorus in Greek
comedy.   If we remember that Reuchlin was the most famous
Greek scholar of the humanistic period[21] and was familiar
with the antique drama, it is safe to understand his words as
meaning that the chorus was introduced in imitation of the
chorus in Attic comedy.

Reuchlin's "Henno" is divided into five acts with a choral
song at the end of the first four.   These choruses have no
part in the action, nor is any attempt made to connect them
even in the slightest degree with the plot.   The play is a Shrove-
tide farce of country life in the dramatic form of Terence, but
the choruses are classic in form and classic in treatment.
At the conclusion of the first act, in which Elsa laments the
loss of the money that has been stolen from her, the chorus
sings of vacillating fortune and the blessings of poverty, for the
poor can lose nothing.   In the remaining odes it sings of poets
and their divine gift.   The choruses in the "Henno" were
printed with music, thus showing that they were intended to
be sung by the students at the university and not declaimed.

The "Henno" immediately became popular.   It was per-

[19] Cf. Creizenach, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 48.

[20] Cf. *Ars Grammatica* (given in Keil, *Grammatici Latini*, I, p. 491) where
Diomedes quotes Suetonius, *De poetis*, p. 11, as describing the chorus in an-
cient Greek comedy as follows: "Membra comoediarum sunt tria, diverbia,
canticum, chorus. . . . In choris numerus personarum definitus non est,
quippe junctim omnes loqui debent, quasi voce confusa et concentu in
unam personam reformantes.   Latinae igitur comoediae chorum non
habent."

[21] The first Greek text of Demosthenes in Germany (1522) was edited by
Reuchlin.   For a discussion of Reuchlin's importance in Greek scholarship
cf. L. Geiger, *op. cit.*, pp. 481 ff.   Cf. also L. Geiger, *Johann Reuchlin, sein
Leben und seine Werke*, Leipzig, 1871, p. 100, who regards Reuchlin "als
den ersten Verbreiter des Griechischen in Deutschland."

formed at the universities and studied in connection with Terence and Plautus, and, in spite of the fact that it had at first few imitators, it soon became familiar to all the German scholars of the time.[22] Then the Reformation drama arose with the all-engrossing desire on the part of its authors to spread the Gospel. Many of the plays were written by clergymen and schoolmasters and these men, who show in their technic the influence of the Latin comedies, saw in the chorus, as treated by Reuchlin, an excellent means of enforcing the teachings of Luther and introduced the singing of popular hymns between the acts. The underlying motive of all these dramas was a didactic one, and in a short time the chorus became, like the rest of the drama, didactic.

An entirely different reason for the introduction of the chorus is given by K. Borinski,[23] who thinks that the chorus was used in the sixteenth century school-drama in imitation of the chorus in the medieval church plays.[24] He quotes as his authority Greff,[25] who in the preface to his "Lazarus" (1545) says: "Wir wissen, dass man vor Zeiten in den alten actionibus zuweilen drein gesungen hat, latein und deutsch, welches nicht ungeschickt gewesen ist, sonderlich das Volk ein wenig munterer und lustiger zu hören." But in spite of the fact that the later sixteenth century dramatists may have felt that they were following the old German drama in the use of the chorus, it is very unlikely that the originators of the Reformation drama, who consciously followed classical technic,[26] and

[22] In the second quarter of the sixteenth century both German and Dutch comedy writers in the classic style refer to Reuchlin as their model.

[23] "Das Chorlied als Zwischenspiel hatte das Schuldrama des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts schon von der Misterienbühne übernommen." (*Die Poetik der Renaissance und die Anfänge der literarischen Kritik in Deutschland*, Berlin, 1886, p. 220.)

[24] Cf. also H. Palm, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Literatur des XVI. und XVII. Jahrhunderts*, Breslau, 1877, p. 91, who thinks that P. Rebhun in introducing the chorus between the acts "nahm nur damit eine, wie es scheint, schon etwas vergessene Sitte wieder auf." Palm also quotes as his authority J. Greff.

[25] Cf. J. Greff, preface to *Lazarus*.

[26] Cf. B. Waldis, preface to *Der verlorne Sohn*, who says his play was written under classic influence . . .

many of whom were confessed imitators of Reuchlin,[27] passed by the chorus in the New Latin comedy to imitate it in a drama that by 1530 was almost forgotten. It is, however, apparent from the way in which the chorus was used that the dramatists did not understand its rôle in the classic drama. They probably never concerned themselves about the traditional chorus. With them the chorus never took part in the action; it was always didactic, always reflective. It was almost always sung, sometimes by a group of people, sometimes by one actor.

The first known Latin writer to model his plays upon the "Henno" was Georgius Macropedius, whose "Rebelles" and "Aluta" may be taken as types of the sixteenth century Latin drama; "Aluta" of that class in which the scenes were taken from daily life, and "Rebelles" of student life on the stage.[28] The influence of Reuchlin is seen in Macropedius' employment of the chorus at the end of the first four acts. These choruses are, however, more closely connected with the rest of the play than are those of Reuchlin, in that they contain moral reflections upon the preceding action and the truths which Macropedius wishes to teach, but even they in no way affect the development of the plot. The choruses in the "Rebelles" and the "Aluta" are merely musical interludes; and, as in the "Henno," they were prefixed to the play with

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> "Dat unnsser Stilus ys sso slicht,
> Mit Terentio gar wenich stymbt,
> Nach mit Plauto overeyn kumbt,
> De wyle ydt ys keyn fabel gedicht,
> Sonder up de rechte wahrheit gericht." (1. 212–216.)

[27] Cf. G. Macropedius, preface to *Aluta* and *Rebelles*. Cf. also *supra*, footnote 6, p. 25.

[28] These plays awakened interest in dramatic production and served as models for many later German dramas. The *Rebelles* was translated into German in 1556 and in 1557. It influenced among other dramas of student life Wickram's *Knabenspiegel* (1554), Hayneccius' *Almansor* in Latin (1578), in German (1582) and Schonaeus' *Dyscoli*. The *Aluta* was translated into German three times during the sixteenth century. It served as the model for the *Vitulus* (1595) of Schonaeus. Cf. also Bolte, *op. cit.*, introduction to *Rebelles*, p. xvi.

their musical accompaniments,[29] that every one might be able
to sing the choral odes according to definite melodies without
troubling to scan them.[30] All the choruses are written in
Horatian meter; in "Rebelles" each chorus is an ode of eight
lines and in "Aluta" an ode of twelve, all in iambic dimeter.
They were intended to be sung by the boys in the school.
According to the "dramatis personae" of "Rebelles" the
chorus is composed "ex Aristippicae scholae auditoribus."
Macropedius has two choruses in "Aluta" after each of the
first four acts. In addition to a chorus of peasant women who
moralize upon the events of the preceding act, there is a chorus
of Bacchantes who chant the songs of Bacchus. It begins
each time with the words "Jacche Bacche ohe, ohe," and is
always the same.

Even before the Dutch school had taken the "Henno"
as its model the German and Swiss schoolmasters had come
under the influence of Reuchlin's chorus and had converted
it to their own use. The first German drama in which the
chorus appears is "Der verlorne Sohn" of Burkard Waldis.
Although a Shrove-tide play in Low German, it is saturated
with the New Learning. According to Waldis' own statement
it was written under the influence of the ancient drama. It
is divided into two acts, the first treating of the departure of
the Prodigal and his downfall, and the second of his return
and restoration to his father's favor. The choral songs are
apparently hymns that were well-known in the sixteenth
century, for Waldis gives only the first line of each. The
chorus is composed sometimes of four and sometimes of five
persons. After the prologue has been delivered, and before
the action opens, a choral song is sung:[31] "Hyr wordt gesungen
de Lavesangk, 'Nu bidden my den hilgen geyst,'—mit vyff
stemmen." At the end of the first act there is an epilogue

[29] The musical accompaniments for the choruses were first printed in the
edition of 1553.

[30] "Adjectae sunt choris post singulos actus notulae quaedam musicae,
quo simplici tenore quisque possit citra laborem versiculos modulari."
(Cf. Bolte, *op. cit.*, introduction to *Rebelles*, p. xxxviii.)

[31] L. 219.

followed by the chorus,[32] "Darnha wardt gesungen de xiij
Psalm, 'Idt spreckt der unwysser mundt wol,'—mit vyff stem-
men." The second act is concerned with the son's return.
While the feast is being prepared the Te Deum is sung, and
during the feast instrumental music is introduced in the form
of trumpets, reed-pipes and flutes. Even while the feast is
in progress the opportunity for introducing sacred songs
is not overlooked. Just before the end[33] "wardt gesungen der
cxxix Psalm, 'Uth deper noeth' etc., met v. stemmen"; and
the play closes with an epilogue. In addition to the psalms
sung during the play six others are printed at the end. The
first three (2, 3, 24) were translated into German by Andreas
Knöpfer, a reformer of Riga, and the others are the work of
Burkard Waldis. Thus we see that at every possible oppor-
tunity the chorus is utilized for the singing of psalms.

The first Swiss drama in which the chorus appears is "Eyn
schœn spil von fünfferley betrachtnussen den menschen zuor
Buss reytzende, durch Joannen Kolrossen uss der heyligen
geschrifft gezogen." It was performed at Basel in 1532.
The subject is not taken from the Bible, but is an original
treatment of the "death dance" in which a young man, dis-
regarding his religious instruction for a life of pleasure, is
wounded by the dart of Death, but is saved by repentance.
The play is not actually divided into acts, but that such a
division was to be understood is seen from the introduction
of four choruses in rimed sapphic meter. The chorus is
composed of four actors. The play opens and closes with a
choral song: "zum ersten singt man mit fier stimmen nach-
gende tüdtsche Saphica." Here the chorus has the rôle
of prologue, urging all to heed the teaching of the play.
This is followed by the prologue proper in which a herald
commands silence and bids the people give their attention
to the play. The choral songs are closely connected with the
plot, in that they give a deeply religious touch to the play by
setting forth the moral and by earnestly and seriously urging
the people to profit by it, for:

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[32] L. 1277.

[33] L. 1934.

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"Sydt wir nit wüssen, waā der tod werd kummē,
So sind geflissen, O jr lieben frummen,
Wachend all stunde, halltend Gottes Bunde,
Dwyl jr sind gsunde!"[34]

At the same time they serve to fill the pauses in the action;
for while the chorus is singing the youth who has been granted
a new lease of life in which to repent goes away——"und diewyl
man singt, zücht er die wältlich kleydung ab, unnd legt demü-
tige kleyder an."[35]   After the epilogue the chorus calls to
mind the five considerations that lead men to repentance and
the whole play concludes with a prayer to God.

The work begun by Kolross was carried on by Sixt Birck in
"Dje history von der fromen Gottsförchtigen frouwen Su-
sanna" (1532).[36]   In the manner of Kolross he divided his
play into three acts by means of two choruses in rimed sapphic
meter.[37]   In 1537, under the influence of the Latin Biblical
drama, Birck rewrote his "Susanna" in Latin, employing
instead of the original three acts the classical five acts.   The
chorus following the first act is the same in both plays, and
the chorus at the end of the third act of the Latin version
corresponds to that at the end of the second act of the
German.   The three remaining choruses are new; for, in
this play, even the fifth act ends with a chorus followed
by the epilogue.   In addition to the hymns after each of
the acts the boys of the school sing before the play opens.[38]
All the choruses harmonize to a certain extent with the
religious treatment of the subject, inasmuch as they are
hymns based upon the psalms; but Birck's treatment of the
first two choruses shows how little connection there was in

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[34] Ll. 328–331.   [35] L. 320.

[36] This play became the model for the many German and Latin *Susannas*
composed during the sixteenth century; Rebhun (1535) was influenced by
the German version, Stockel (1559) and Frischlin (1578), by the Latin
version.

[37] Cf. for Birck's use of antique meter in the choruses, Höpfner, *Reform-
bestrebungen auf dem Gebiet der deutschen Dichtung des 16. u. 17. Jahrh.*
(Berliner Progr., 1866, p. 9.)

[38] The musical accompaniment for this hymn is printed with the text.

the minds of the sixteenth century dramatists between the chorus as they used it and that of the classic drama. To them the chorus meant nothing more than singing between the acts, and it was immaterial whether this was done by a group or merely by one person. The choral ode after the first act, though a poetic version of the thirtieth psalm, is nothing more than a soliloquy in sapphic meter in which Susanna expresses her faith in the justice of God. In the second chorus a still further innovation is made by the introduction of the allegorical figure of "Sapientia" to sing a selection from the eighth chapter of Proverbs.[39] The other choruses are, however, sung by a group of boys.

In 1535 appeared the first drama as an art form (Kunst-drama) in the German language, the "Susanna" of Paul Rebhun. In this play there is apparent for the first time a clear comprehension of the classical technic and a conscious effort to reproduce the poetic form and dramatic structure of the ancient drama; especially of the antique chorus. In the use of the chorus Rebhun departed from the usual custom of introducing at the end of the act familiar songs or hymns, which might, perhaps, because of their religious significance, harmonize with the action or emphasize the teaching of the piece. Instead of this he composed lyrics that were closely connected with the preceding action, and which, as in the old Greek drama, might be said to express the thoughts and feelings of the ideal spectator. Rebhun bestowed great care upon the structure of his choruses. They were intended to be sung and were written in strophic form. The first chorus consists of four strophes of ten lines each. The first two strophes tell of the power of Venus and her son, and in the last two, which are sung as "proportio" to the first two, chaste love is extolled in contrast to unholy love:

> "sölch lieb kumt nicht von Venus her,
> sant Paul gepeuts in seiner ler;
> darumb wirs billich preisen,
> darumb wirs billich preisen."[40]

[39] The stage direction for this choral song is "ex VIII Proverbiorum capite sub persona Sapientiae."   [40] Ll. 306–308.

In the second chorus five four-line strophes are sung, followed by the "proportio," which consists of two ten-line strophes in entirely different meter. The third and fourth choruses are in the complicated style of the court lyric, each chorus being composed of three strophes of thirteen lines each. As in the "leich,"[41] the lines are of unequal length and are written in various kinds of meter. In the third chorus an eight-syllable trochaic line is followed by a single iambus, followed in turn by a seven-syllable iambic line, etc.

> "David, der prophetisch man,
>   zeigt an,
>   durch Gottes geist geleret:
>   wer sich fest auf Got erbaut
>   und traut,
>   der wirt nicht umbgekeret; etc."[42]

Although the first two choruses resemble the court song in metrical form it is likely that Rebhun intended that the "proportio" should correspond to the antistrophe of the Greek chorus; for a contrasted idea is always treated in the "proportio."[43] Rebhun's plays were a decided advance upon those of his predecessors, but the other dramatists of the sixteenth century, who were not interested in the form of the drama, ignored the innovations of this scholar and continued to write their plays in the old "Knittelvers."[44]

A whole flood of Biblical dramas in classical form followed in the wake of these early plays. But in spite of their number there were no great dramatists, and but few who are worthy of mention. The sixteenth century dramatists were interested not in the literary but in the pedagogical aspect of the drama. There was, accordingly, no thought of originality; the same subjects were treated again and again, and in exactly the

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[41] Cf. the "leich" as written by Walter von der Vogelweide.

[42] Ll. 307 ff.

[43] Cf. F. Böhme, *Geschichte des Tanzes in Deutschland*, Leipzig, 1886, Vol. I, pp. 254 ff., who believes that these choruses were accompanied by dances.

[44] Cf. Hans Sachs, the greatest dramatist of the period, who always used the *Knittelvers*.

same way. The earliest drama on any subject was likely to become the model for all later ones. Keeping in mind this inevitable similarity, I have endeavored, so far as it was possible, to examine the texts of those plays which were most popular at the time they were written and which exerted the greatest influence on the subsequent dramas of the sixteenth century, and which may, accordingly, be taken as types. A further investigation of the Latin and German school-plays would doubtless bring to light new details with regard to the chorus, but the general characteristics would remain the same.

What, then, are the characteristics of the sixteenth century chorus? It is most sharply distinguished from either the Greek or the Latin chorus by its didactic and religious nature. It had no other significance beyond that of a musical interlude sung at the end of an act, or even, occasionally, during the act to bridge over pauses in the action. The treatment of Biblical subjects, as has been pointed out, naturally led to the use of familiar church songs, [45] which because of their religious character expressed to a certain degree the lesson which the dramatist wished to teach. But the cases were few where, as in the "Susanna" of Rebhun, the choruses were composed expressly for the drama and therefore closely connected with it. A proof that the dramatists in many cases did not write definite choruses for their plays, but used instead appropriate hymns or psalms, is that directions are frequently given for singing when the songs are not printed with the text. In the "Joseph" of Gart[46] (1540) we read "volgend mag gesungen werden diser nachgeschribner Psalm."[47] That the chorus was, moreover, felt to have no vital connection with the action, is seen from the fact that the dramatists employed or omitted it at will. Rebhun uses it in his "Susanna," but not in "Die Hochzeit zu Cana"; Naogeorgus has it in his "Incendia," (1541) but not in his "Pammachius" (1538); W. Gnapheus

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[45] The chorus was usually accompanied by definite melodies.

[46] End of Act II. (Text in *Elsässische Litteraturdenkmäler aus dem XIV–XVII. Jahrhundert*, edited by Ernst Martin and Erich Schmidt, Strassburg, 1880, Vol. II.)

[47] Cf. also *Der verlorne Sohn* of B. Waldis, *supra*, p. 32.

does not have it in his "Acolastus" (1529), but does in his "Hypocrisis" (1544).

The plays were generally supplied with a prologue and an epilogue, and the choruses were introduced at the end of the first four acts. Sometimes the play ended with a chorus, either before or after the epilogue; as in the "Rebelles" of Macropedius or the "Incendia" of Naogeorgus. Zeigler in his "Pedonothia" (1543) has a chorus after all the acts except the fourth. Choral songs are also occasionally sung before the opening of the action. Such a use of the chorus is found in Kolross' "Fünferlei Betrachtnisse"; in Birck's "Susanna" (1537); in Krüger's "Action von dem Anfang und Ende der Welt" (1566). In some few cases the choral song appears even in the middle of the act. In the "Action von dem Anfang und Ende der Welt" the chorus of angels sings both in the middle and at the end of the first scene of the first act.

The choral songs were of course sung by the schoolboys, but little can be said about the size of the chorus, There seems to have been no definite number. In the "Susanna" of Birck (1537) the first two choruses are sung by one actor; in Krüger's "Action von dem Anfang und Ende der Welt" (1566) we read with regard to the chorus of angels, "angeli, und so vil man irer sonsten immer haben kan."[48] In most cases, however, the list of "dramatis personae" does not include the chorus.

In a few instances the audience took part in the play. In "Saul" (1606) of Wolfhart Spangenberg, Saul praises David and concludes with the words: [49]

> "Dass dein Lob immer grösser sey
> Gott wöll dich lieben Hertziglich:
> All Menschen müssen preysen dich:
> Auch unser Volck müsse vollbringen
> Dein Lob mit Reygen und mit singen,"

[48] Cf. "dramatis personae" of the play. (Text in *Schauspiele aus dem sechzehnten Jahrhundert*, edited by J. Tittmann, Leipzig, 1868, Vol. II.)

[49] End of Act I. (Text in *Elsässische Litteraturdenkmäler aus dem XIV–XVII. Jahrhundert*, vol. IV.)

after which follows the chorus, sung apparently by "das Volk." In the "Susanna" (1537) of Birck,[50] the eighth psalm is sung by the "populus." Thus we see that the dramatists of this period took the chorus as they understood it and modernized it by adapting it to their own needs.

The meter used in the choral songs varies. The Latin choruses were originally odes in Horatian meter. They were generally written in iambic or trochaic dimeter, asclepiad, sapphic, glyconic or alcaic meter; and a desire to write choruses according to a classic model led, in some cases, to the employment of these meters for the German plays. Both Kolross in his "Fünferlei Betrachtnisse" and Birck in his "Susanna" (1532) used "gereimte teutsche Sapphica." Rebhun is, I believe, the only sixteenth century dramatist who attempted to compose, in the German language, choruses according to the Greek model in strophe and antistrophe. But in general the choral songs of the German drama were in the crude doggerel meter of the religious songs of the sixteenth century,[51] many, as we have seen, being hymns taken over directly from the church service.[52]

The great work of the Reformation was finished by 1555. But although there was a tendency to turn from religious to secular subjects and to tragic treatment, the Senecan drama which at that time was all-important in Italy, France and England, seems to have had no imitators in Germany. The tragedies that were taken from Virgil, Livy and Ovid were based upon the Roman comedies,[53] and the favorite dramatic form continued to be that of the half-Biblical, half-Terentian school-drama[54] But even in the dramas of this period there were present tendencies which were to force the chorus into

[50] Act V, sc. 4.

[51] Cf. Luther's *Ein feste Burg*, based on the forty-sixth psalm.

[52] Cf. *supra*, p. 33 B. Waldis, to whose play were suffixed six psalms.

[53] Nicodemus Frischlin, the foremost dramatist of the latter half of the sixteenth century in writing his *Dido* and *Venus* aimed to create a "Terentius Christianus."   Cf. further Holstein, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

[54] Cf. Creizenach, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 425; cf., however, C. H. Herford *Studies in the Literary Relations of England and Germany in the Sixteenth Century*, Cambridge, 1886, pp. 98–99.

the background. The popular drama that was performed in the market-places did not have a regular chorus, but scattered throughout the plays of Jacob Ruff, Hans Rudolf Manuel, Jakob Funcklin, and many others are references such as "Musica," "Trummeten," "Pfifen," "Pausando." This instrumental music, which at first served to bridge over pauses in the plot, was later used to signify the division of the play into acts, and when the plays were actually so written it supplied entertainment between the acts. But it was not long before instrumental music, the use of which had originated with the Swiss dramatists and had spread to the German popular drama was adopted by the authors of the German school-drama and was found side by side with the choral songs.[55] In the "Joseph" (1540) of Gart[56] are found the following directions: "Hie mag gesungen, gepfiffen oder georglet werden diss nachvolgende oder anders." Susanna in Birck's "Susanna" (1532) says just before she sings the first choral ode:[57]

> "wie ich yetzunder singen wil
> von hertzen uff dem orgel spil."

In Krüger's "Action von dem Anfang und Ende der Welt," after Gabriel announces the birth of Christ to the shepherds, the chorus of angels returns to heaven "singende: all er und lob sol Gottes sein etc.,"[58] and when Christ ascends into heaven "die engel mit posaunen und trommeten, oder ander seitenspiel in empfangen sollen."[59] In the second half of the century, however, when the didactic purpose of the drama became less pronounced, and the urgent need of spreading the Gospel was no longer felt, there was a tendency to give up the choral song entirely for instrumental music which became more and more the favorite form of interlude.

In 1587 appeared English players who controlled the German

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[55] There are, of course, cases in the early Biblical drama, as for example, *Der verlorne Sohn* of B. Waldis where instrumental music was used in connection with the choral song, but the practice did not become general until later in the century. [56] End of Act I. [57] L. 485.
[58] Act II, sc. 1. [59] End of Act III.

stage until the Thirty Years' War.[60] In spite of the fact that choral songs are found in the plays of Lyly, Peele, Marlowe and the other Elizabethan dramatists,[61] these plays as performed in Germany by the "English comedians" do not contain a chorus.[62] The plays were brought into Germany by second-rate actors who were not concerned with faithfully producing them, for there is only the remotest connection between the original English dramas and those played in Germany. What they aimed to do was to emphasize and bring into prominence those things which appealed to popular taste. At first the plays were performed in English and between the acts a clown was introduced who spoke in German, but whose sayings were seldom more than coarse horse-play and whose acting consisted of acrobatic tricks. Instrumental music was always a prominent feature of the English plays, especially between the acts. As time passed the interlude was developed until it completely overshadowed the rest of the play, and the whole effect was that of noise and confusion caused by horns, trumpets, drums, fireworks, dancing and the tricks of the clown; all of which formed so essential a part of the English productions. With the appearance of the "English comedians," the chorus practically disappears. In the enthusiasm aroused by the foreign plays and the professional actors, the old Biblical drama and the performances of the mechanics and the schoolboys were forgotten. Nor is there any trace of the chorus in the German plays that were written under English influence, but instrumental music is the usual form of entertainment between the acts.[63]

Before concluding this chapter, it seems advisable to review briefly the development of the chorus in the century we have just been studying. But it is first necessary to emphasize the fact that there is no connection between the choral songs of

[60] "The earliest record of this English invasion dates from 1587." Cf. C. Thomas, *A History of German Literature*, New York, 1909, p. 164.

[61] Cf. *supra*, pp. 8–9.

[62] Cf. Creizenach, *Die Schauspiele der englischen Komödianten*. (In Vol. 23 of Kürschner's *Deutsche Nationalliteratur*, Einleitung, p. xcii.

[63] Cf. Jacob Ayrer and Duke Heinrich Julius von Braunschweig in whose dramas instrumental music is introduced between the acts.

the sixteenth century and those sung by the groups of minor characters centered about the leading characters of the old church plays. For even before the era of the Biblical drama, these old plays were regarded with disfavor and began to pass out of existence. The chorus is found for the first time in the sixteenth century drama in the "Henno" of Reuchlin. This chorus which, according to the indirect statement of the author, was introduced under the influence of the chorus in Attic comedy, was taken over by the writers of the Reformation drama and was used as a means of enforcing the teachings of the play. The tendency to use popular hymns between the acts, which was first apparent in the plays of the German schoolmasters and clergy, became more pronounced when in 1636 the Latin Biblical drama was introduced into Germany by the performance of "Acolastus." The play was immediately translated and affected both the Latin and the vernacular drama. Under its influence the dialogues and pageants of the humanists gave way to the Biblical drama in Latin. Men who had previously written in German began to translate their plays or to compose anew in Latin. The use of the Latin language led to a more or less general adoption of the classical technic, and consequently to the use of the choral songs as a recognized part of this technic. By the middle of the century the work of the Reformation was finished, religious subjects gave way to secular, but the Graeco-Roman technic of Reuchlin, popularized by the Latin and the German Biblical drama continued to be used. But a counter-influence was at work. Even before the advent of the English players the increasing popularity of instrumental music, as a means of entertainment between the acts, tended toward the gradual elimination of the choral song. At first instrumental music was introduced in addition to the chorus, but later in the century there was a tendency to omit the choral ode entirely. Consequently the appearance of the "English comedians," who relied for their popularity upon the use of instrumental music, dances and acrobatic feats between the acts of their plays, hastened rather than caused the abolition of the choral song.

CHAPTER IV

From Gryphius to Gottsched

During the Thirty Years' War practically all connection with the literature of the sixteenth century was severed. With the exception of the English plays which were occasionally performed dramatic productions were entirely forgotten.[1] Accordingly when, at the end of the war, the dramatists again turned to play-writing, they were compelled to follow foreign models. In the second half of the seventeenth century there were three types of drama:[2] the popular drama, showing in the antics of the clown and in the use of instrumental music between and during the acts the influence of the English players; the opera which was imported from Italy and was received with favor by the nobility; and the so-called "Kunstdrama," modeled upon the Senecan technic, which was brought into Germany by the imitation of the Dutch and to a lesser degree of the French drama.[3]

Andreas Gryphius, the greatest German dramatist of the seventeenth century, was the first to produce tragedies in imitation of Renaissance models. All his plays are tragedies of martyrdom; dramas of passive suffering in the spirit of Seneca. With the exception of "Cardenio und Celinde,"[4]

[1] "The few weak attempts at Biblical drama during this period have no significance." Goedeke, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 189.

[2] Cf. further, A. Koberstein, *Grundriss der Geschichte der deutschen Nationalliteratur*, Leipzig, 1872, Vol. II, p. 234.

[3] By the middle of the seventeenth century Seneca had exerted his greatest influence in France, England and Holland; but the Thirty Years' War had so far retarded the development of German literature that in 1648, with the exception of the Jesuit drama, there had been practically no imitation of the Roman tragedies in Germany.

[4] It is interesting to note that this play was the indirect cause of Graf von Platen's attack upon Immermann in *Der romantische Oedipus*, a satiric comedy with a chorus in imitation of the chorus in Old Greek Comedy. Cf. *infra*, p. 80.

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the heroes are always innocent victims "rejoicing to suffer death for virtue and religion." Every drama has a didactic purpose; to teach the vanity of human affairs, "die vergänglicheit menschlicher sachen in gegenwertigem und etlich folgenden trauerspielen vorzustellen."[5]

Gryphius was not an original genius. He was a pioneer in the dramatic field of the seventeenth century, and in his choruses especially he seems to have followed first one model and then another without adhering consistently to any one form of treatment. He was acquainted with the Dutch, French,[6] Italian and Jesuit[7] dramas, but the influence of the Dutch and the Jesuit is most apparent in his plays.[8] The influence of the Jesuit drama is especially discernible in his fondness for the bizarre or the unusual both in subject and in character.[9] The influence of Vondel is traceable in every play.[10]

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[5] Cf. preface to *Leo Armenius*. Andreas Gryphius, *Trauerspiele*, edited by H. Palm, Tübingen, 1882. This edition was used throughout.

[6] The French drama was more strongly influenced by Seneca than was the Dutch. Gryphius follows the Dutch whenever it departs from the French and Seneca. Cf. R. Kollewijn, *Über den Einfluss des holländischen Dramas auf Andreas Gryphius*, Heilbronn, S. A., p. 71.

[7] Although the chorus was an essential part of the technic of the Jesuit drama, I have not attempted to discuss it, because the Jesuit drama was always written in Latin until the end of the seventeenth century and was always confined to the schools. For a discussion of the chorus in the Jesuit drama cf. Holstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 271 ff.; also P. Bahlmann, *Das Drama der Jesuiten*. (In *Euphorion*, 1895, Vol. II, pp. 271 ff.)

[8] The classical drama of the ancients had almost no direct influence. Cf. Goedeke, *op. cit.*, Vol. V, p. 189. But the indirect influence of the Greek and the Latin drama was strong, i. e., the influence of Seneca through the dramas of Hooft and of Sophocles through the dramas of Vondel.

[9] For the influence of the Jesuit drama upon Gryphius cf. Willi Harring, *Andreas Gryphius und das Drama der Jesuiten*, Halle, 1907. (dissertation).

[10] For example, the "Reyhen der Hofe-Junckern Papiniani" at the end of Act I of *Papinianus* is very similar to the "Rey van Eubeers" in Act III of the *Palamedes* of Vondel. Also, the fourth choral song of *Leo Armenius* corresponds to the second and third of Vondel's *Gysbreght van Aemstel*. In each case there is a three-fold chorus. Vondel's influence upon the metrical form of Gryphius' choruses will be discussed later. Cf. Kollewijn, *op. cit.*, pp. 62 ff., for a detailed comparison of Vondel and Gryphius.

It was undoubtedly this familiarity with so many types of the Renaissance drama, coupled with a misunderstanding of the essential nature of the chorus and a total disregard of stage requirements, that gave to most of the choruses of Gryphius their incongruous and highly artificial character. Not quite certain in his own mind as to the proper treatment of the chorus, he lets his imagination run riot in this part of the play.[11] Strange experiments in characters, form and subject show how far he has departed from truth and reality. With few exceptions the choruses are utterly devoid of life and make the plays dramatically ineffective.

Gryphius has a chorus after each of the first four acts; only in "Leo Armenius" III. 1, "Papinianus" II and V and "Carolus Stuardus" V, does the chorus appear in the middle of the act. The stage-directions show that, with these exceptions, the chorus is not on the stage during the course of the action but appears at the conclusion of the act. In "Carolus Stuardus" I the chorus of murdered English kings leaves the stage with the words: "Weicht geister! Britten ist kein ort vor stille seelen!"[12] In "Papinianus" IV the furies are supposed to vanish before the eyes of the audience.[13] In "Papinianus" II, Justice descends from the clouds, calls the furies from the lower world and, at the conclusion of the choral song, again mounts to heaven. Gryphius generally has, moreover, a different chorus for each act, thus making it impossible for the chorus to remain on the stage during the progress of the play. The song of joy sung by the attendants of Catharina of Georgia after the decree of death is pronounced by Chach Abas would lead one to imagine that the chorus was not even supposed to be aware of the course of the action.

As might be expected, the choruses have little or no vital connection with the rest of the play. In the few cases in which the chorus does appear during the course of the action, its rôle

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[11] Cf. *Carolus Stuardus*, Acts I and II; also *Cardenio und Celinde*, Act IV.
[12] L. 351.
[13] "Die geister verschwinden," stage direction at the end of Act IV.

is that of a sympathetic witness rather than of an actor.[14] Even when the choral song consists of observations and reflections of a moral tendency suggested more or less directly by the content of the preceding act, the tragic effect is often spoiled and an artificial tone is given to the whole because these reflections are sung by mythological personages who bear no relation to the words they sing. But Gryphius frequently goes even further, and the choruses are interludes pure and simple. They are given by allegorical figures and are so little connected with the action that they might be transferred from one play to another without any loss of appropriateness: for example, "Cardenio und Celinde" III, where a scene is enacted by Time, Man and the Four Seasons in the form of the four ages of man; or "Catharina von Georgien" IV, where, after Virtue has urged mortals to be constant, a dialogue takes place between Death and Love.

The characters found in the choruses are rarely such as belong inherently to the play.[15] In addition to living personages such as maidens, priests and courtiers, Gryphius introduced spirits, mythological and allegorical characters. Dead kings, furies, sirens, religion, heresy, virtue, love, death, justice, time, all have a rôle in his choruses. Spirits and allegorical figures, although not found in the choruses of the classic tragedy,[16] were regarded as an essential part of the technic of the Renaissance drama and were extensively used in the Jesuit drama.[17] They are also found in a more limited number in the plays of Hooft, and Gryphius' adoption of them is probably due to these influences. Another Renaissance charac-

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[14] *Papinianus* II and V; also *Carolus Stuardus* V.

[15] There is no regularity with regard to the size of the chorus, but the number of characters varies in the different choruses.

[16] Cf., however, the chorus in Old Greek Comedy which was often composed of mythological beings, as furies, sphinxes, sirens; also of fanciful personifications, as towns, clouds, seasons. Were the Jesuits influenced by Old Greek Comedy?

[17] Cf. "Chor der streitenden kirchen" and "Reyhen der himmlischen" (including, "Die seligkeit," "die zwei Engel") which are found in *Die heilige Felicitas* of the French Jesuit, Nicolaus Caussin, translated by Gryphius (1634).

teristic is the use of the double chorus. This is found only two or three times in Greek tragedy[18] and only twice in Seneca,[19] but it is not uncommon in the Renaissance drama.[20] Gryphius makes frequent use of it, as, for example, the chorus of priests and maidens in "Leo Armenius" IV, or of the attendants of Plautia and of Papinianus in "Papinianus." This is discussed more fully later.

Gryphius calls his choruses "Reyhen" in imitation of Vondel.[21] They are either composed[22] in the three-fold division of "Satz," "Gegensatz" and "Zusatz," taken by Vondel from Sophocles,[23] or in the strophic form of Seneca.[24] The "Satz" was probably intended to be sung by one half of the chorus, the "Gegensatz" by the other, and the "Zusatz" by the whole chorus; for Gryphius sometimes designates this form by "chor," "gegenchor" and "chor und gegenchor zusammen." Gryphius divides his chorus in this way in "Leo Armenius" I and III and in "Catharina von Georgien" I and II. The metrical form of the "Gegensatz" always corresponds to that of the "Satz," while that of the "Zusatz" is different. Gryphius still further imitates Vondel by occasionally repeating the "Satz," "Gegensatz" and "Zusatz"; as in "Leo Armenius" IV, in "Carolus Stuardus" II, and "Papinianus" III. In "Carolus Stuardus" I, it is repeated twice. Gryphius employs a variety of meter in the choruses in imitation of Seneca, but "most frequent are the

[18] Cf. Euripides, *Hippolytus;* Aeschylus, *Seven against Thebes.*

[19] Cf. *Agamemnon* and *Hercules Oetaeus.*

[20] Cf. for French Renaissance drama, Jodelle, *Didon,* in which there is a chorus of the attendants of Dido and a chorus of the attendants of Aeneas. Also, Garnier, *Porcie,* in which there are three choruses, and *Antigone.* For Dutch Renaissance drama, cf. Vondel, *Palamedes,* in which there is a Rey van Eubeers and a Rey van Ithakoiser.

[21] In 1639 Vondel in his *de Maagden* for the first time divided his chorus into "Zang," "Tegenzang" and "Toezang." Further, cf. Kollewijn, *op. cit.,* p. 64.

[22] For a detailed discussion of the meter in the choruses of Gryphius, cf. Kollewijn, *op. cit.,* pp. 74–76.

[23] This division is not found in the French or the Senecan drama.

[24] It is not unusual to find the Greek technic of Vondel and the Latin technic of Hooft employed in the same drama.

four-, six- or eight-line strophes in iambic or trochaic meter: as in "Leo Armenius" II, "Catharina von Georgien" III, "Cardenio and Celinde" I, II, and IV, "Carolus Stuardus" III and "Papinianus" I. The only instance of the use of dactylic meter is in "Papinianus" IV.[25] Gryphius seldom employs Alexandrine meter for his choruses. In "Carolus Stuardus" IV, where the chorus is spoken by Religion and Heresy, Religion speaks in Alexandrine meter and Heresy in five foot iambic meter. The women and attendants in "Papinianus" V also speak in Alexandrine meter. That some if not all of the choruses were intended to be sung to the accompaniment of orchestral music is seen from the fact that in "Leo Armenius" III, the stage-direction is "Violen. Unter währendem seitenspiel und gesang entschläfft Leo auf dem stuhle sitzend."

The following plays illustrate most clearly the characteristics of the choruses in the dramas of Gryphius: "Leo Armenius," where the sanest treatment of the chorus is found, for no allegorical figures are introduced; "Papinianus," where the treatment resembles that of the Sophoclean rather than of the Senecan chorus; and "Carolus Stuardus," where the chorus has reached the height of artificiality and loses all excuse for existence. The rôle played by the chorus in "Leo Armenius" is purely lyrical, for it does nothing to further the development of the plot. The first three choruses, which are sung by a group of courtiers, are reflective and didactic, two important characteristics of the Renaissance drama. After the fourth act there is a double chorus of priests and virgins. The words of the chorus at the end of the first act are those of the ideal spectator, who, having observed the preceding events, feels that the disaster of Balbus is due to his recklessness in expressing his views to the emperor's councilor. The "Satz" extols "speech" by means of which all the marvels of the earth have been disclosed; and upon which the life of man depends. In the "Gegensatz" the contrasted idea is taken up;[26] the destruc-

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[25] Kollewijn, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

[26] Cf. *supra*, p. 36, Rebhun's use of a contrasted idea in the "proportio" of the choral song.

tive power of the tongue, for to reckless words are due all the
woes of mankind.

"Wie manchen hat die zung in seine grufft verdrungen!
   Des menschen tod beruht auf iedes menschen zungen."[27]

The "Zusatz" concludes with a moral precept,

"Lernt, die ihr lebt, den zaum in eure lippen legen, . . .
   Dein leben, mensch! und todt hält stets auf deiner zungen!"[28]

At the end of the second act we again find the chorus in the
rôle of ideal spectator; for, impressed by the sudden fall of Bal-
bus, it here reflects upon the uncertainty of life.[29]   The chorus
of musicians and singers in the first scene of the third act does
not actually appear on the stage, but is supposed to be sta-
tioned outside the emperor's room.[30]   It serves a definite
purpose in that it bridges over a gap in the action, for the
emperor is represented as sleeping "unter währendem seiten-
spiel und gesang."   The choral song is, however, lyrical and
not dramatic.   It creates an impression of peace and security,
and thus furnishes a contrast to the terror aroused by the
appearance of the spirit of Tarasius.   The continuity of the
action is broken by the chorus at the end of the third act.
During the act our thoughts are focused on Balbus and his
chances of escape.   He fills the scene and the chorus shatters
the illusion by commonplace remarks about dreams, remarks
that have no connection with the last part and only a forced
connection with the first part of the act.   After the fourth
act there is a double chorus and a double set of "Satz,"
"Gegensatz" and "Zusatz."   The "Satz" is sung by the vir-
gins, the "Gegensatz" by the priests, while both join in sing-
ing the "Zusatz."   In the second case the "Satz" is sung by
the priests, the "Gegensatz" by the virgins and the "Zusatz"
again by both.   Although the choral songs are Christmas
carols there is a slight connection with the action; for the

[27] ll. 359–540.   [28] ll. 541 and 554.
[29] Compare the sentiment of this chorus with the last choral ode of
Oedipus Rex of Sophocles.
[30] Act III, l. 6.   "Ruffe du die sänger vor die thür."

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conspirators gained access to Leo's palace disguised as priests and planned to kill him during the singing of the second hymn.

In "Papinianus" there are five distinct choruses: the chorus of Papinianus' pages, of the attendants of Julia, of the furies, of the Roman courtiers and of the ladies-in-waiting of Plautia. Although there is not so much freedom in the choice of the characters who compose the choruses, there is greater freedom in the way in which these choruses are used. The first act is concluded by a song in praise of the goodness and virtue of Papinianus. It consists of eleven six-line strophes sung by the pages of Papinianus. In the second act the attendants of the empress Julia are present when Geta is stabbed by Bassianus. After the murder Julia swoons and Bassianus rushes from the stage. The chorus bridges over the gap in the action with lamentations and cries of horror. These are arranged in dialogue form as if intended to be spoken by individual members of the chorus. But here, as in all other cases when the chorus appears in the middle of the act, it does not affect the development of the plot. When Julia comes to her senses the action is, it is true, carried on by her and the chorus, but the rôle of the chorus is limited to single exclamations which reëcho the grief of Julia. When a second actor comes on the stage the chorus remains silent. After the second act there is an unusual employment of the chorus. It is neither Greek nor Roman, but bears a certain resemblance to the interlude of the popular drama.[31] This interlude is in the form of a scene between Justice and the furies, who sing separately as individuals and together as a group. During the sounding of trumpets Justice descends from the clouds to the earth and sings of the punishment that is to be devised for the fratricide, a punishment so terrible that all the earth

[31] In the popular drama, it was customary for the interlude to be in the form of a scene enacted by characters other than those in the drama. The use of the "Zwischenspiel" either with or without the chorus is also found in the Jesuit drama. Cf. J. Zeidler, *Studien und Beiträge zur Geschichte der Jesuitenkomödie und des Klosterdramas.* (*Theatergeschichtliche Forschungen*, hrsg. von B. Litzmann, *Heft* 4, s. 117f.)

will speak of it. She then calls the furies, who come from the lower world to avenge the murder of Geta. Each presents herself separately to Justice and is given power to torture Bassianus.

> "Das grosse Rom erstarrt ob seinem Bassian.
> Sein bruder fiel durch ihn; fallt ihr den mörder an!"[32]

is her command to them, after which she again returns to heaven. This chorus, which is of the same type as the chorus of Religion and Heresy in "Carolus Stuardus,"[33] has absolutely nothing in common with the traditional chorus; in fact, it can hardly be called a chorus at all. It is merely a dramatic scene bearing a certain relation, it is true, to preceding events, but a relation that is artificial and unnatural. At the conclusion of the third act the chorus which is sung by courtiers refers to the fall of Laetus, the instigator to the murder. It contains commonplace reflections upon the impossibility of escaping the consequences of sin, describing in great detail the tortures of the sin-laden conscience. The Sophoclean form of "Satz," "Gegensatz" and "Abgesang" is sung twice. After the fourth act we again find a fanciful treatment of the chorus. It is a scene between a group of furies and the spirit of Severus, the father of Bassianus, and is really a continuation of the scene after the second act.[34] According to the stage directions the emperor Bassianus is represented as sleeping in his chair. An anvil and hammers are brought on the stage by several winged spirits and upon this the three furies forge a dagger. As they work, each of these furies sings a verse of a song referring to Bassianus and the punishment they are preparing for him. After each verse the group sings the following refrain:

> "So wie die schläg auff diss eisen abgehen,
> Müsse, wer schuldig, die hämmer ausstehen!
> So wie die funcken umfliegen und springen,

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[32] Il. 571–572. [33] End of Act IV.
[34] This also reminds one of the popular drama, in which a connected interlude between the acts of the drama was not unusual.

Müsse der blitzen sein hertze durchdringen!
So wie sich feuer und stahl hier vermählen,
Muss ihn der fluch auch durchbrennen und quälen!"[35]

The spirit of Severus expresses his horror of the deed and
asks the furies for the dagger they are making, that he may
perform the duty of avenger. When it is finished they give
it to him. Then all the spirits vanish, and after their dis-
appearance the emperor awakens and sorrowfully leaves the
stage. In this case the furies may, perhaps, be said to take
part in the action, for they are represented as appearing to
the emperor in a dream and torturing him as he sleeps. In
the fifth act there are two choruses; the attendants of
Papinianus and the chorus of Roman women, whom Plautia
calls "auserkohrne frauen und freundinnen." The action
practically ends with the death of Papinianus, but the re-
mainder of the act is devoted to expressions of sorrow and
grief over the disaster that has befallen him. Both choruses
join in these lamentations. The chorus of Roman women
has, in addition, an important rôle as ideal spectator, in that
it gives expression to the feelings which Gryphius wished to
be aroused in the audience by the misfortune that has befallen
a righteous man. The play ends with four lines sung by the
chorus of women. They are in the form of an epilogue to the
play, but there is no choral song after the fifth act such as is
found at the end of the first four acts.

Gryphius introduces into "Carolus Stuardus" four distinct
choruses that have absolutely no relation to each other. They
represent all the types employed by him: living personages,
mythological, allegorical and spiritual figures. The first chorus
warns the English people of the confusion and uproar that
will result from the execution of Charles, and tells of the
punishments that come to those who put the kings to death.
It refers to King Charles whose greatest crime was "zu viel
geduld."[36] But in spite of the connection with the preceding
action, the tragic effect is lost because the words are sung by a
chorus of spirits of murdered English kings. The "Chor,"

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[35] ll. 455–460.   [36] I. 328.

"Gegenchor" and "Abgesang" are sung three times, thus giving
an even more artificial tone to the whole. The second choral
song, in which the sirens reflect upon the changes that have
taken place on the European thrones during recent years,
consists of general observations that have only the slightest
connection with the action. This slight connection is, more-
over, forgotten when the words are sung by a band of sirens, for
it is hard to see the relation between the fate of King Charles
and a chorus of sirens. Here the " Chor," " Gegenchor" and
" Abgesang " are sung twice. After the third act a double
chorus of maidens and matrons lament the conditions in Eng-
land. Their song bears a general relation to the whole play
rather than to any particular act. It consists of six eight-line
strophes, overladen with mythological references in the style
of Seneca. The maidens sing the first, third and fifth strophes,
and the matrons the others, but the choral song is, however,
not in dialogue form, for the words of the matrons amplify
rather than answer those of the maidens. After the fourth
act there is an interlude in Alexandrine meter, which was
probably intended to be spoken and not sung. It is not lyric
but dramatic, being a scene between Religion and Heresy.[37]
Religion is personated by one character and Heresy by nine.
The interlude begins with a monologue by Religion, who
determines to leave the world where crime is committed in her
name. Now the responsibility for the execution of the king
will be placed upon her. As she is about to ascend into the
clouds the other chorus tries to prevent her flight from the
earth. The mantle which she wears falls to the ground, and a
struggle ensues between the members of the chorus represent-
ing Heresy for the possession of it. The concluding words
are spoken by Religion from the clouds. The chorus re-
presenting Heresy does not speak in unison, but each mem-
ber speaks as a distinct individual. Two choruses appear on
the stage during the fifth act. A chorus of maidens stand at
the windows of the palace and watch as King Charles is led
to ·the scaffold and executed. They take no part in the
action and never address the actors; their only function being

[37] Cf. *supra*, p. 51.

to comment upon what is taking place. They speak in Alexandrine meter as individuals, and only when the deed is done and they give utterance to their grief do they speak as a group. After the death of the king and at the end of the act the chorus of murdered English kings again appears and plays a peculiar rôle. It cannot be said to take part in the action, for the action really ends with the death of the king and the other actors do not again appear. Nor is it in the form of a lyric choral song such as we ordinarily find at the end of the act. It is rather a dramatic epilogue to the play, in which the members speak both as individuals and as a group, probably to represent the confusion of the chorus. They call for Revenge, who appears and speaks the closing words.

Gryphius became the model for the other "Kunstdramen" of the seventeenth century. The best known of his successors are Daniel Casper von Lohenstein, August von Haugwitz and Johann Christian Hallmann, who imitated him slavishly both in form and content. [38] Typical members of the Second Silesian School, they carried to excess all the faults of the Renaissance tragedy and produced tiresome dramas in which everything is exaggerated and unnatural. In accordance with Gryphius and the Senecan tradition they always introduced a chorus at the conclusion of the first four acts. This chorus was frequently composed either of mythological or of allegorical figures such as justice, virtue, revenge, Jupiter, Mars, the Parcae, etc. Nor did these dramatists hesitate to personify rivers, mountains, countries, etc. Lohenstein in his "Epicharis"[39] introduced the Tiber and the seven hills of Rome, who lament the tyranny of Nero, and in the fourth choral song he introduced as members of the chorus Europe, Asia and Africa. The choruses are full of pedantry, bombastic conversation

[38] It was not possible to obtain the dramas of Haugwitz or of Lohenstein (with the exception of *Cleopatra*) and I was compelled in the case of these two dramatists to follow E. Grucker, *Histoire des doctrines littéraires et esthétiques en Allemagne*, Paris, 1883; G. Gervinus, *Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung*, Leipzig, 1871, Vol. V, p. 565; Koberstein, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 281 ff. Also, B. Huebner, *Die kleineren Dichtungen und Dramen des Prodromus Poeticus von Aug. Ad. von Haugwitz*, Neuwied, 1893.

[39] End of Act III.

and erudite moralizing. They have absolutely no connection with the plot and, overladen as they are with mythological references, are entirely lacking in reality and life. In fact, with Lohenstein the chorus has so completely ceased to be regarded as a part of the action that at the conclusion of the act the scene is sometimes changed before the appearance of the chorus. The stage-direction for the second choral song of "Cleopatra"[40] is: "Der Schauplatz bildet ab ein lustiges Gebirge," and for the fourth, "Der Schauplatz verändert sich in eine lustige Gegend am Flusse Nilus." As in the tragedies of Gryphius, the choral songs are either in the Senecan form or in the "Satz," "Gegensatz" and "Zusatz" of the Greek.

Hallmann followed the dramatic form of Lohenstein, but the influence of the Italian opera is seen in the prominence of the lyric element in his dramas. More and more songs were introduced in addition to the regular chorus, until Hallmann finally left the field of tragedy and gave himself up to the pastoral and the opera.

In 1684[41] the "Kunstdrama" passed away. With its disappearance the chorus ceased to be a recognized part of dramatic technic. The reason for its brief period of existence is to be found in the character of the drama itself. Written entirely for scholars, the type never became popular; the plays were seldom performed and consequently never succeeded in gaining a firm foothold in Germany. Even with Lohenstein clearness of expression had been neglected in the desire to give an air of erudition to the dramas. Accordingly, with the increasing importance given to song, it was but a step from the "Kunstdrama" to the opera in which the words were entirely subordinated to the music.

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[40] Edited by F. Bobertag. (Vol. 36 of Kürschner's *Deutsche National-literatur*.)

[41] "Mit dem Jahre 1684, in dem die dramatischen Werke von Hallmann und Haugwitz gesammelt erschienen, erlischt das deutsche Renaissance-drama; es hatte abgewirtschaftet, wie am besten die letzten Ausläufer zeigen." (Paul Stachel, *Seneca und das deutsche Renaissancedrama*, Berlin, 1907, p. 349.)

At this point it seems desirable to say a few words about the theory of the chorus in the seventeenth century. The German dramatists have in general preferred to follow models rather than to evolve theories; but during the Renaissance period in which everything was justified by reason, and again during the transition period of the early eighteenth century and the formation of the regular drama, the theory of poetry assumed importance. Many theories were written during the seventeenth century, but of this number but few have any reference to the chorus.[42] Literary criticism in the seventeenth century was almost entirely dominated by the works of Scaliger, Heinsius and Ronsard, which had been brought into Germany by Opitz. Just as in the criticism of the drama in general, so in the criticism of the chorus in particular, there is apparent no desire to set forth new ideas, but each critic follows closely the opinion of his predecessor.[43] Consequently, to know the theories of a few critics is to know the theories of all.

The sixteenth century dramatists had used the chorus blindly. No theories of dramatic criticism were written, and to them the chorus meant nothing but a song between the acts. The seventeenth century writers knew that the chorus had been used in the classic drama, but had no clear idea of the purpose it had served. No effort is made to explain its presence in the seventeenth century drama, but the discussions of the chorus are merely superficial statements of the rôle it played in this drama. Birken[44] in the third chapter of "Teutsche Rede-bind und Dicht-Kunst"[45] describes the chorus

[42] The first work of dramatic criticism by a German was the *Buch von der deutschen Poeterei*, by Opitz (1624). In this, however, there is no mention of the chorus.

[43] "Was Opitz am Eingange des Jahrhunderts über das Drama gesagt hat, das finden wir getreulich abgedruckt bei Omeis, nebst dem, was alle seine Vorgänger auf dem Gebiete der 'edlen Poeterey' geschrieben haben." (Georg Popp, *Über den Begriff des Dramas in den deutschen Poetiken des 17. Jahrhunderts*, Leipzig, 1895, p. 28.)

[44] I was unable to obtain the texts of the poetic theories of the seventeenth century, but was fortunate enough to find the important theories quoted in G. Popp, *op. cit.* [45] Quoted by G. Popp, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

as follows: "Die Chöre oder Zwischenlieder sind nach allen Handlungen zwischen eingeschaltet und entweder von einem oder mehreren Personen in eine Musik pflegen abgesungen zu werden. Diese Lieder reden gemeiniglich von den Tugenden oder Lastern, welche die vorhergehendsten Spielpersonen an sich gehabt: da jene gelobet, und diese gescholten werden. Diese Lieder dienen nicht allein den Spielschauern zu zeigen, was sie aus dem Schauspiel zu lernen haben, *sondern auch den Schauspielern, dass sie Zeit gewinnen, sich etwa nach notdurft umzukleiden.*" In the didactic purpose of the chorus is seen the influence of Horace.[46] It is interesting to note that the choral songs were not only intended to teach the audience, but to assist the actors by giving them an opportunity to change their costumes for the next act. The same idea is brought out in Harsdörfer,[47] who says of the chorus:[48] "Dieses Lied hat die Lehren, welche aus vorhergehender Geschichte zu ziehen, begriffen, und in etlichen Reimsätzen mit einer oder mehr Stimmen deutlich hören lassen. Die Reimsätze oder Gesetze dienen dies Orts, damit der Singer dazwischen ein wenig mit dem Odem rasten kann und dass die Meinungen nicht zu sehr ineinander gemenget sind, wie in ungebundener Rede von etlichen zu geschehen pfleget." Even though the play itself be in prose, the choruses must always be in metrical form. "Wann man aber die ungebundene Rede als natürliche gebrauchen wollte, weil der allerfliessenste Reim nicht ohne Zwang ist, so müssen doch die Chorlieder reimweis gesetzt werden."[49] The choral song was used only in tragedy. In comedy the acts were separated by music, but not by singing, "Musik ohne Gesang.—Wann aber die ganze Verfassung in ungebundener Rede, so könnte man viel dazu gewidmete Lieder singen lassen; sonsten aber, wann es durch und durch Verse und keine Lehren beygebracht, so ist die Musik allein genug."[50] To this statement Omeis[51] adds: ". . . der Chor

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[46] Cf. *Ars Poetica*, ll. 193–201.
[47] *Poetischer Trichter, die Teutsche Dicht- und Reimkunst, ohne Behuf der lateinischen Sprache, in VI Stunden einzugiessen*, etc., Nürnberg, 1653.
[48] Quoted by G. Popp, *op. cit.*, p. 37.   [49] *Ibid.*, p. 38.   [50] *Ibid.*, p. 40
[51] "Gründliche Anleitung zur Teutschen akkuraten Reim- und Dichtkunst

heutzutage nicht allein zwischen den actibus, sondern auch im Anfange und Ende des Spiels durch Vocal- und Instrumentalconcert sich hören lässt."[52]   He also emphasizes the "usefulness" of the chorus: "Chor oder Zwischenlieder dienen zur Information, indem sie zeigen, was aus dem Spiel zu lernen sei, als auch den Schauspielern, dass sie Zeit gewinnen, sich nach Nothdurft auss- und umzukleiden."[53]   Thus in the seventeenth century, as in the sixteenth, the chorus was regarded as a song that was sung by one or more persons between the acts of the tragedy.   Its purpose was didactic, to teach by pointing out the vices and virtues of the actors. In no case do the theorists say that the chorus should be present during the action, but it is always designated as "Zwischenlied."   During this century no attempt was made to study the chorus intensively or to explain its significance in the technic of the drama; and it is not until the eighteenth century that serious criticism of the drama began with Gottsched's "Versuch einer critischen Dichtkunst" (1737), in which is found a somewhat more comprehensive discussion of the chorus.

The remainder of the seventeenth century and the early years of the eighteenth was a period of dramatic decadence. The popular drama had developed into the Haupt -und Staatsaction with all its crudities and vulgarities.   Songs, dances and instrumental music were introduced during and after the acts, and all distinction between drama, opera and ballet seems to have been lost.   Goedeke[54] says of this epoch: "Und so verläuft die dramatische Literatur mehr und mehr in Übersetzungen und Aufzüge, Ballette und Opern."   The only dramatists worthy of mention in this period are Christian Felix Weise and Gottsched, neither of whom employed the chorus in their dramas.

Toward the beginning of the second quarter of the eighteenth century the influence of Gottsched led to the reform of the

durch richtige Lehrsätze und Lehrart deutliche Reguln und reine Exempeln vorgestellet von Magnus Daniel Omeis."

[52] Quoted by G. Popp, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

[53] *Ibid.*, p. 47.   [54] *Op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 230.

coarse and boisterous German stage and to the gradual
abandonment of the Haupt- und Staatsactionen for the digni-
fied regular drama, at first entirely under French influence,
and later, in accordance with the ideas of Johann E. Schlegel
and Lessing under English influence. But although Gott-
sched does not employ the chorus[55] in his dramas, he discusses
it in his "Versuch einer critischen Dichtkunst."[56] Gottsched
was the first to attempt an explanation of the significance of
the ancient chorus; in fact he restricts himself almost entirely
to a discussion of the chorus as he thought it was used by the
Athenians. But, in common with the Renaissance critics,
his theories show the influence of the "Ars Poetica" of Horace
rather than of the "Poetics" of Aristotle. In his opinion the
antique tragedy was "äusserlichem Ansehen nach, in zweyer-
ley Stücke eingetheilet: nemlich in das, was gesungen, und in
das, was nur gesprochen wurde . . . freylich war das Singen
die vornehmste Pflicht des Chores, welches zu vier verschie-
denen Malen, nemlich zwischen allen fünf Handlungen
geschah."[57] The old chorus had three distinct functions: first
and foremost, that of setting forth moral precepts, for the
chorus "stimmete allezeit in seinen Liedern solche moralische
Betrachtungen, Gebethe und Lobgesänge an, die sich zu der
unmittelbar vorhergehenden Handlung schicketen. Diese
lernte man damals gar auswendig, und pflegte sie im gemeinen
Leben als Lehrsätze und Denksprüche bey Gelegenheit an-
zubringen."[58] Its second function was that of connecting
the five acts. "Es waren aber diese fünf Handlungen un-
tereinander eben durch den Chor der Sänger verbunden; und
also," he adds, "wurde die Aufmerksamkeit der Zuschauer
auf die gespielte Fabel nie ganz unterbrochen: So wie es bey
uns durch die Musikanten geschieht, die allerley lustige

[55] Gottsched belonged to the French school of theorists. He, in accord-
ance with the technic of the French drama, did not employ the chorus,
but introduced the confidant which the French theater had adopted as a
substitute for the old chorus. Cf. *supra*, p. 8.

[56] Leipzig, 1737, Vol. II, Chap. 10.

[57] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Chap. X, par. 7 and 8.

[58] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Chap. 10, par. 4.

Stücke darzwischen spielen; oder auch wohl gar durch Tänzer, die sich zwischen den Aufzügen sehen lassen."[59]   Finally it was a spectator of the action.   "Diese Leute (der Chor) nun fanden sich bald in der ersten Handlung auf der Schaubühne ein, und behielten ihren Platz bis ans Ende des ganzen Spieles. Sie vertraten daselbst die Stelle der Zuschauer, die bey der Handlung, so man spielete, zugegen gewesen, als sie wirklich geschehen war."[60]   Although Gottsched regarded the chorus as an important part of the technic of the classic drama he does not say that it should be employed in the contemporary drama.   For with him everything was judged by its "Wahrscheinlichkeit."   The chorus was natural to the antique drama and therefore probable.   "Denn das muss man wissen, dass die wichtigsten Handlungen der alten griechischen Fürsten nicht zwischen vier Wänden; sondern öffentlich vor ihren Pallästen, oder auf den Märkten ihrer Städte vorgiengen. Da war nun allezeit eine Menge von Zuschauern zugegen, die an dem Thun und Lassen ihrer Könige Theil nahmen; auch wohl nach Gelegenheit ihre Meynung davon sagten, gute Anschläge gaben, oder sonst ihre Betrachtungen drüber anstelleten. Da nun die Poeten die ganze Natur solcher öffentlichen Handlungen vorstellen wollten und sollten; so mussten sie auch Zuschauer derselben auf die Bühne bringen: Und das war denn der Chor."[61] If the Greek scene, then, was to be true to life, there had to be a chorus, but "heute zu Tage, da unsre Fürsten alles in ihren Zimmern verrichten,"[62] it is no longer probable to imagine the action as taking place "vor den Augen alles Volks."[63] But, although Gottsched felt no need of a chorus that should remain upon the stage throughout the action, he did feel that a certain advantage was to be gained by the introduction of a group of singers between the acts. Lively instrumental music or dancing such as was customary between the acts of the German drama, in his

[59] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Chap. 10, par. 9.
[60] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Chap. 10, par. 7.
[61] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Chap. 10, par. 7.
[62] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Chap. 10, par. 18.
[63] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Chap. 10, par. 18.

opinion, served only to distract the attention of the audience from the drama itself.[64] Gottsched, accordingly, wonders "ob es nicht möglich wäre anstatt der alten Oden des Chores, eine nach unsrer Art eingerichtete Cantata, von etlichen Vocalisten absingen zu lassen; aber eine solche, die sich alle-zeit zu den kurz zuvor gespielten Begebenheiten schickte, und folglich moralische Betrachtungen darüber anstellete. Dieses würde ohne Zweifel die Zuhörer in dem Affecte, darinn sie schon stünden, erhalten, und zum bevorstehenden desto besser zubereiten. Und eine solche Tragödie würde zehnmal schöner seyn, als eine Opera, die den Liebhabern der Musik zu gefallen alles durchgehends musikalisch vorstellen lässet; aber dabey ganz und gar von der Natur abgehet, und die ganze Wahrscheinlichkeit aufhebet."[65] Thus an opportunity would be given to connect the acts and to set forth the moral precepts; an idea that was, of course, entirely in accordance with Horace and the Renaissance tradition.

Thus we have seen that the choral song of the sixteenth century, yielding to a natural tendency, which was hastened by the appearance of the English players, had given way to instrumental music between the acts. During the Thirty Years' War the dramatic productions of the preceding cen-tury were practically forgotten, and the introduction of the chorus in the seventeenth was due to a new influx of foreign literature. The chorus that was brought into Germany in this century was the product of a long line of development from the Greek through the Senecan, Italian, French and Dutch dramas, and Gryphius followed as his model choruses that had long lost vital connection with the drama. The blind imitation of a number of models coupled with the neglect of stage conventions resulted in choruses that were altogether artificial and incongruous, and in which there is apparent no effort to appeal to popular taste. His successors were members of the Second Silesian School. They found in the choral song an opportunity to display their erudition by means of obscure mythological references, and they carried

[64] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Chap. 10, par. 9 and 26.
[65] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Chap. 10, par. 26.

to the extreme all the inconsistencies and incongruities of the choruses of Gryphius. At the same time the music became so important a factor of these performances that in 1684 the drama itself gave way to the opera and to the pastoral, and the chorus ceased to be regarded as a part of dramatic technic.

CHAPTER V

THE CHORUS IN THE EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES

Contemporaneously with the English influence in Germany interest in ancient literature began to assert itself; the Greek tragedies were translated[1] and some few attempts were made to adapt the chorus to the German stage. Pyra used a chorus in his tragedy "Jephta"[2] and Cronegk, probably under the influence of Racine's "Athalie," attempted in "Olint und Sophronia" to employ the chorus as a means of connecting the acts more closely. But the chorus was not popular,[3] and when the play was performed in the "Hamburg National Theater" in 1767 it was omitted.[4] Lessing's "Hamburgische Dramaturgie" (1767) with its strong insistence upon the imitation of the Greeks failed to exert any immediate influence; all antique tendencies were swept aside by the "Storm and Stress" movement, and it was not until the great classical period of German literature that the gospel of the imitation of the Greeks began to spread. The first instance[5] of the chorus in this period is "Timoleon (1785), ein Trauerspiel mit Chören," by Fr. L. Graf zu Stolberg. In 1787 appeared a number of

[1] Early in the eighteenth century, many German dramatists translated the Greek tragedies into German. Joh. Elias Schlegel made some translations in 1737. Cf. Koberstein, *op. cit.*, Vol. V, p. 360.

[2] Cf. Koberstein, *op. cit.*, Vol. V, pp. 360–361.

[3] Gebler (1770) wrote an heroic drama with a chorus. Cf. Koberstein, *op. cit.*, Vol. V, p. 393.

[4] To this period belong the "Bardiete" of Klopstock: "Hermanns Schlacht" (1767), "Hermann und die Fürsten" (1784) and "Hermanns Tod" (1787), each with the sub-title "Ein Bardiet für die Schaubühne." But although these plays contain "bardic" choruses, they need only be mentioned in this discussion, for Klopstock was not a dramatist, and the "Bardiete," though written for the stage, are in no sense dramatic.

[5] Cf. Koberstein, *op. cit.*, Vol. V, p. 401.

"Schauspiele mit Chören" by the brothers Chr. and Fr. L. Grafen zu Stolberg.[6]   But these attempts also remained without imitation and were merely closet-dramas.   At this time the ghost of the antique chorus was haunting the mind of Goethe.   His study of the Greek poets had made him feel the need of the lyric element in the drama, and he accordingly introduced the "Song of the Parcae" into his "Iphigenie" (1787).   The lyric element is also prominent in "Faust," both in the first and the second parts; in fact, Goethe never neglects an opportunity to bring in groups of singers: such as the chorus of angels and women on Easter morning, the chorus of soldiers, of peasants, of spirits, of witches or of mythological characters.[7]   In 1795 Goethe took up the serious study of Greek tragedy with Schiller, for both dramatists felt that only in the imitation of classic models was the ideal dramatic form to be found.   At the same time Goethe began but never completed "Der befreite Prometheus" in which he intended there should be a chorus of Nereids.   In 1803 he made a careful study of the Greek chorus, as is shown by his treatise upon the development of the ancient chorus ("Über Entwicklung des antiken Chors"), which he sent to Zelter in June of that year.

Schiller's interest in the Greek drama was stimulated by the "Iphigenie" and he became eager to try his hand at "a simple tragedy in the strict Greek form."[8]   He had translated some of the choral odes in the "Iphigenia in Aulis" of Euripides and had become interested in the Greek chorus.   In 1788 he

[6] These plays are *Theseus, Belsazar, Otanes* and *Der Säugling;* the first and fourth are by the younger, the second and third by the older brother. Cf. Koberstein, *op. cit.*, Vol. V, p. 402.

[7] Although the grumblings of the crowd in the first act of the second part are in reality comments upon the events that are taking place, it is very improbable that Goethe was, in this case, thinking of a chorus, in either the ancient or the modern sense.   For at no time is a connected thought spoken by the mob as a whole, but what we have is a series of interrupted expressions which together suggest the dissatisfaction of the crowd.   Cf. C. Thomas, Goethe's *Faust*, Boston, 1905, Pt. II, note to l. 4756.

[8] Cf. Letter to Körner, May 13, 1801. (*Schillers Briefe*, edited by F. Jonas, Stuttgart, Vol. VI, p. 277.)

began "Die Maltheser." He intended that the chorus should be an important part of this drama and should be composed of sixteen knights of the religious order.[9] This plan, however, never came to completion and it was not until August of 1802 that he seriously set about writing a tragedy in the Greek form. On May 2, 1803, he writes W. Becker:[10] "Die Braut von Messina ist freilich nicht im Geschmack der Zeit, aber ich habe den Wunsch nicht bezwingen können, mich auch einmal mit den alten Tragikern in ihrer eigenen Form zu messen, und zugleich die dramatische Wirkung des alten Chors zu erproben." Schiller's "Braut von Messina" was entirely an experiment, in which, as he writes Iffland,[11] he thought more of himself than of the public. It was not until the play was almost finished that he began to wonder about the effect upon the public. "Die Handlung wird zwar theatralisch genug seyn," he writes in a letter to Körner, January 7, 1803,[12] "aber die Ausführung ist durchaus zu lyrisch für den gemeinen Zweck, und, ich darf mit gutem Gewissen hinzusetzen, für das Talent gemeiner Schauspieler zu antik." His fears were not groundless, for in spite of its enthusiastic reception at the first performance at Weimar, the "Braut von Messina" did not receive unmixed praise. This tragedy is unique in German literature. No other drama has ever been so ardently admired or so bitterly attacked as this attempt to follow the Greek form, and from the first the question of the tragic effect of the chorus has been one of the most important points of discussion. After the first performance Schiller wrote to Körner:[13] "Über den Chor und das vorwaltend Lyrische in dem Stücke sind die Stimmen natürlich sehr getheilt, da noch ein grosser Theil des ganzen deutschen Publikums seine prosaischen Begriffe von dem Natürlichen in einem Dichterwerk nicht ablegen kann. Es ist der alte und der ewige Streit, den wir beizulegen nicht hoffen dürfen. Was mich selbst betrifft, so kann ich wohl sagen, dass ich in der Vorstellung der Braut

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[9] Cf. L. Bellermann, *Schillers Dramen*, Leipzig, 1908, Vol. III, p. 205.
[10] *Schillers Briefe*, Vol. VII, p. 37.
[11] Cf. Letter to Iffland, April 22, 1803, *Ibid.*, Vol. VII, p. 34.
[12] *Ibid.*, Vol. VII, p. 1.   [13] March 28, 1803, *Ibid.*, Vol. VII, pp. 29–30.

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von Messina zum erstenmal den Eindruck einer wahren Tragödie bekam. Der Chor hielt das Ganze trefflich zusammen, und ein hoher, furchtbarer Ernst waltete durch die ganze Handlung. Goethen ist es auch so ergangen, er meint, der theatralische Boden wäre durch diese Erscheinung zu etwas höherem eingeweiht worden."

The tragedy was also enthusiastically received in Hamburg and in Berlin. Iffland sent word from Berlin that the total effect was profound, lofty and awesome. "Die Chöre wurden meisterhaft gesprochen und senkten sich wie ein Wetter über das Land."[14]

Körner[15] felt that the chorus heightened the dramatic effect. He also felt that the picture gained in richness by the diversity of character in both choruses. On the other hand, the play met with violent opposition. Herder regarded it as "ein crasses Unding," and the Romanticists, Tieck and the Schlegels, unsparingly criticised both the chorus and Schiller's conception of fate. Bellermann[16] cites the following illustration of how widely the contemporary dramatic critics differed as to the effect of the chorus. In reporting the first performance of the "Braut von Messina" in Berlin on June 14, 1803, the *Königliche privilegierte Zeitung von Staats- und gelehrten Sachen* of June 16 says of the chorus: ". . . die gesprochenen Chöre machten zum Teil eine herrliche Wirkung." On the same day the *Berliner Nachrichten von Staats- und gelehrten Sachen* reported of the same performance: ". . . die Chöre rissen viele unwillkürlich zum Lachen hin, und am Ende des Stückes ging man *sehr ruhig fort.* . . . Der gesprochene Chor tat mehr eine spasshafte als imponierende Wirkung."

It was the opposition that induced Schiller in June, 1803, to write his famous treatise, "Über den Gebrauch des Chors in der Tragödie."[17] In it he defends his use of the chorus and

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[14] Cf. letter to Schiller, April 8, 1803.

[15] Letter to Schiller, February 28, 1803. (*Schillers Briefwechsel mit Körner*, edited by K. Goedeke, Leipzig, 1878, Pt. II, pp. 434–435.)

[16] *Op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 3.

[17] Cf. Schiller's *Braut von Messina*, edited by W. Carruth, New York, 1901, pp. 121–132.

at the same time takes the opportunity to make known his opposition to naturalism. The highest type of art, he says, is that which is ideal and in the strictest sense real. "The artist can use no single element of the actual as he finds it. His work must be ideal in all its parts if it is to have an intrinsic reality and is to harmonize with nature." The same is true of tragedy. Here also it is necessary to contend with the ordinary notion of the natural, which destroys all poetry. "All the externals of a theatrical representation are but symbols of the real:" time, architecture, language—all are ideal. Why then must the action alone be real? With the adoption of poetic diction a great advance was made toward the ideal drama, but "the final, the decisive step" in the elevation of the tragedy from the realm of the natural to that of the ideal would be "the introduction of the chorus." "The ancient tragedy found the chorus in nature, and for that reason employed it. It grew out of the poetical aspect of real life." But, he goes on to argue, since "the modern poet no longer finds the chorus in nature, he must create it poetically; that is, he must so transform his material as to be able to set the action back into the time when life was simple and poetic." This is the first duty of the chorus. It must free the action from the prevailing naturalism of the modern stage, and "give to it its ideal ground, its poetic freedom." "The chorus thus renders more substantial service to the modern dramatist than to the ancient, for the reason that it transforms the commonplace actual world into the old poetic one." "The chorus, moreover, purifies tragedy by separating the unavoidable reflection from the action" and by restricting it to the choral passages. At the same time "the tragic poet entwines his rigidly contracted plot with a web of lyrical magnificence in which, as in flowing robes of purple, the actors move freely and nobly with dignity and lofty calm." The lyric splendor of the chorus compels the poet to elevate the diction of the entire drama. "This one giant form on his canvas obliges him to mount all his figures on the cothurnus and thus impart a tragic grandeur to his picture." "As the chorus gives life to the language, so also it gives repose to the action"; for it not only allays the

passionate feelings of the spectators "by the calm observations
that it utters between the outbursts of passion," but it also
by its reflections moderates the passions of the actors.

"This is what the chorus effects in tragedy. It is, in itself,
not an individual but a universal conception; yet it is repre-
sented by a palpable body which appeals to the senses with an
imposing grandeur. It leaves the narrow sphere of the action
to enlarge upon the past and the future, upon distant times
and nations, upon whatever is human; to sum up the great
results of life and to express the maxims of wisdom. But it
does this with the full power of fancy, with a bold lyrical
freedom which moves along on the high summit of human
affairs, as it were, with the stride of the gods; and it does it
accompanied by the whole sensuous power of rhythm and of
music in tone and movement."

Here for the first time in the history of the German chorus
emphasis is placed upon the esthetic significance of the chorus,
which tends to elevate and ennoble us by lifting our thoughts
and feelings above the commonplaces of life. Schiller was
correct in saying that "the chorus of the Greek drama, the
chorus as a single ideal person, furthering and accompanying
the whole action, had never been reproduced since the decline
of the old tragedy."[18]

In conclusion Schiller remarks that he has divided the chorus
into two parts and has represented it in conflict with itself;
but this, he adds, is only the case when it acts as a real person
and as an unthinking multitude. As chorus and as ideal
person it is always one and united. This is more clearly
brought out in a letter to Körner:[19] "Wegen des Chors bemerke
ich noch, dass ich in ihm einen doppelten Charakter darzu-
stellen hatte, einen allgemein menschlichen, nämlich, wenn er
sich im Zustand der ruhigen Reflexion befindet, und einen
specifischen, wenn er in Leidenschaft geräth und zur handeln-
den Person wird. In der ersten Qualität ist er gleichsam
ausser dem Stück und bezieht sich also mehr auf den Zuschauer.
Er hat, als solcher, eine Überlegenheit über die handelnden

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[18] *Über den Gebrauch des Chors in der Tragödie*, p. 131.
[19] March 10, 1803. (*Schillers Briefe*, Vol. VII, p. 24.)

Personen, aber bloss diejenige, welche der ruhige über den passionierten hat. . . . In der zweiten Qualität, als selbsthandelnde Person, soll er die ganze Blindheit, Beschränktheit, dumpfe Leidenschaftlichkeit der Masse darstellen, und so hilft er die Hauptfiguren herausheben."

That Schiller's chorus is not Greek has been frequently pointed out by the commentators. But Schiller did not set out to imitate a Greek tragedy. What he intended was a tragedy that should be strictly Greek in form; "with a simple action, few characters, close observation of the unities, and a chorus that was to be the 'Hauptwirkung' of the whole drama,"[20] and yet, at the same time, one that should be distinctly his own creation. The chorus in the "Braut von Messina" is, accordingly, not an imitation of the old chorus but a new creation, and as such is interesting and important for the history of the chorus in the German drama. The question is, therefore: Is the chorus, as Schiller conceived it, logical and consistent, and does it perform for the tragedy the office Schiller claims it should? Most of the critics say no. From the first appearance of the "Braut von Messina" criticism has centered about two points that were first mentioned by Wilhelm von Humboldt. In a letter to Schiller[21] (October 22, 1803,) he wrote that he had two objections to make with regard to the chorus. "Er ist den handelnden Personen zu nah." The members of the chorus, he felt, should not have been represented as the vassals of the two brothers, for "da sie jeder einem andern Herrn folgen, sind sie nicht mehr reine Bürger von Messina, und da ihr eigner Ehrgeiz ins Spiel kommt, ist ihr Urtheil nicht das unpartheiische des Schicksals, so wie es sich in Menschen ausspricht." The second objection concerns the division of the chorus into two parts. "Den Chor auf eine Art für die ganze Ökonomie des Stücks wichtige und geltende zu theilen," Humboldt considers an excellent idea; but, he continues, "Ihre Theilung hat mich nicht ganz befriedigt. An sich wäre das Alter gewiss ein ganz schicklicher

[20] Letter to Iffland, February 24, 1803, *Ibid.*, Vol. VII, p. 17.
[21] *Briefwechsel zwischen Schiller und Wilhelm von Humboldt.* Edited by A. Leitzmann, Stuttgart, 1900, pp. 309–313.

Theilungsgrund. Allein da beide Theile Ihres Chors noch jetzt
dienende und mitwirkende Ritter sind. . . so giebt er eigent-
lichen Zwiespalt, da er nur Contrast zeigen sollte. Denn in
allem, was auf die Handlung Bezug hat, muss der Chor mit
sich selbst vollkommen übereinstimmend sein."

Humboldt's words have been echoed by the critics ever
since. Thus in the first place they claim that the chorus takes
so active a part in the action that it is blinded by passion and
because of partisanship is hindered from the universal point
of view which is the office of the chorus. Secondly,[22] they
maintain that the chorus never forms a unified whole; that it
is psychologically impossible for two semi-choruses that have
such contradictory interests in the action and that possess all
the narrowness, blindness and stupid passion of the mob to
unite in harmonious reflection and express the same sentiments.

Schiller attempted to justify the division of the chorus by
saying that there is such a division only when the chorus acts
as "wirkliche Person" and as "blinde Menge." But neither
this statement nor his claim that the chorus as ideal spectator
is always one with itself is convincing. The fact is, Schiller's
effort to make the chorus play a double rôle resulted in some-
thing quite different from what he had intended. He was not
satisfied to introduce a chorus in imitation of the Sophoclean
chorus, that is, one that by its questions would further the
development of the plot, and during the pauses in the action
would reflect upon the events that were taking place; but his
chorus must also bring into prominence the characters of the
leaders. This necessitated the division of the chorus into two
groups with characteristics so utterly different that as a result
the impression of two distinct choruses is much stronger than
that of a single chorus at times divided into two parts. This
impression is, moreover, emphasized by the way in which
Schiller develops the action, for the first chorus is always in
the foreground, it is the leading chorus and to it are given the
important reflective passages. At their first appearance the

[22] This is the substance of the criticism made by B. Gerlinger, *Die
griechischen Elemente in Schillers Braut von Messina*, Augsburg, 1858,
p. 33.

two groups are placed in strong contrast: the followers of Don Manuel, older and accordingly more serious, more reserved, and more given to the "reflection that befits old age";[23] the followers of Don Cesar, younger, hasty, wrathful and desirous of war. For this reason, the first choral passage, "Hört, was ich bei mir selbst erwogen,"[24] which is spoken by the knights of Don Manuel, must be regarded as being the sentiments of this chorus alone. It is, however, only natural that the whole chorus should unite in saying:

> "Aber wir fechten ihre Schlachten;
> Der ist kein Tapfrer, kein Ehrenmann,
> Der den Gebieter lässt verachten";[25]

for all are vassals whose only law is the command of the leaders. During the two most important choral passages, "Sage was werden wir jetzt beginnen,"[26] and "Sagt mir! Ich kann's nicht fassen und deuten,"[27] the first chorus is on the stage alone. The choral passage, "Durch die Strassen der Städte"[28] is also spoken by the first chorus as the body of Don Manuel is brought on the stage. In these lyric passages the chorus produces the effect that Schiller claims it should. Here it approaches its ideal significance and rises to its loftiest heights, giving a moral and poetic grandeur to the tragedy. The passages spoken by the second chorus alone, "Heil dir, O Jungfrau,"[29] and "Den begünstigten Sohn der Götter beneid' ich,"[30] are not reflective, but are in the lighter and more joyous vein of the hymeneal song, and accordingly entirely in keeping with the character of the younger chorus.

In the last act, however, when the death of Don Manuel forces the allegiance of the first chorus to Don Cesar, and when tragic events such as would stir the depths of even the lightest and most thoughtless nature lift the second chorus above its hatred and enmity to a contemplation of the great underlying principles of life, the chorus is, for the first time, "eins mit sich

selbst,"[31] and becomes, in truth, the ideal spectator. Then
and then only do both groups unite in saying "Auf den
Bergen ist Freiheit!"[32] and for the remainder of the play there
is but one chorus. It is just this division into two distinct
groups, one a band of serious men who, because of their ex-
perience and maturity, might reasonably give utterance to deep
and profound thoughts, and the other, a band of impulsive,
passionate men who do not reflect, that makes the chorus
psychologically possible.[33] For by this division, Schiller, even
while developing the semi-choruses in such a way as to make
them reflect the characters of their leaders, is enabled to avoid
the necessity of "uniting the utterly dissimilar choruses in
harmonious reflection or of making them express the same
sentiments."[34] The other objection raised by the critics may
be stated thus: How can the chorus without contradicting
itself at one time blindly follow the course of events and at
another be capable of impartial judgment? This objection
might be brought against the impulsive, wrathful followers
of Don Cesar, but until the end of the play they do not reflect.
According to Humboldt[35] "der Chor muss ohnmächtig, dienend
und schwach sein, aber frei und nicht einmal durch Neigung
gefesselt." This is true of Schiller's first chorus. For a
group of men who as members of a conquered race are bound
to their rulers by no ties of sympathy or regard, who as vassals
must acknowledge an allegiance they do not feel, are not likely
to be so carried away by feelings of partisanship as to be in-
capable of calm and impartial reflection. The first chorus
asks:

> "Warum ziehn wir mit rasendem Beginnen
> Unser Schwert für das fremde Geschlecht?
> Es hat an diesen Boden kein Recht."[36]

[31] Cf. *Über den Gebrauch des Chors in der Tragödie*, p. 132.

[32] Ll. 2585–2588.

[33] It seems as though Schiller's dramatic feeling guided him safely where
his theories, if actually carried out, would have led him astray; for a chorus
such as he claims his is, would have been psychologically impossible.

[34] Cf. *supra*, footnote to p. 70.

[35] Letter to Schiller, October 22, 1803, *op. cit.*, p. 309.

[36] Ll. 203–205.

> "Sklaven sind wir in den eigenen Sitzen,
> Das Land kann seine Kinder nicht schützen."[37]

In fact, the point that is most clearly brought out at the first appearance of the chorus is that it does not express personal enmity, but the enmity that a vassal must feel for the enemies of his prince.[38]

> "Dich nicht hass' ich!   Nicht du bist mein Feind!
> *Eine* Stadt ja hat uns geboren,
> Jene sind ein fremdes Geschlecht.
> Aber wenn sich die Fürsten befehden,
> Müssen die Diener sich morden und töten,
> Das ist die Ordnung, so will es das Recht."[39]

Moreover, although the chorus does not stand aloof from the storm and stress of the action, as does the Greek chorus, the feelings it expresses are merely reflected feelings.   Schiller gives the chorus the blindness, pettiness and stupid passion of the mob that it may the more naturally reflect the characteristics of the leaders and thus throw them into prominence; but the chorus never by its own actions vitally affects the development of the plot.[40]

When the chorus is considered as two distinct groups each group is seen to be logically and consistently developed and

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[37] Ll. 222–223.

[38] The antique chorus always stands in a definite relation to the hero, in most cases, one of loyalty, though sometimes of hostility.   In the *Ajax* of Sophocles the chorus of Salaminian sailors is bound to Ajax by closest ties of allegiance, but is too weak either to prevent his death or to secure his burial.   Like the chorus in the *Braut von Messina*, this chorus takes part in the action but is powerless to affect the development of the plot.

[39] Ll. 175–180.

[40] In several cases Schiller goes too far in making them reflect the leaders. When the members of the chorus embrace after the reconciliation of the brothers the effect more closely approaches the ludicrous than the dramatic. Although later in the play it is not unnatural that, under provocation, the habits of a lifetime should come to the fore and that the first chorus should contend with the second, still the whole scene impresses one as being an unnecessary lowering of the dignity of the chorus.

the first chorus, reserved, serious, fearful of consequences, in fact possessing all the characteristics of the Greek chorus, is far enough removed from the action to be capable of impartial reflection.

Schiller made no attempt to imitate the complicated metrical form of Greek tragedy with the strophe, antistrophe and epode, but used the simplest verse forms; the most usual being the irregular stanza composed of trochaic and dactylic tetrameter. The lyrics have all the dignity and sublimity of the antique choral odes. In spite of the very great disagreement on other points, all the critics agree with Hoffmeister,[41] who says with regard to the choral songs: "diese mit der grössten Sorgfalt ausgearbeiteten und mit erhabener Pracht vorgetragenen, das ganze Leben überblickenden, himmelansteigenden Hymnen und Betrachtungen . . . in denen eine Ideenfülle, eine Kraft, Frische und Kühnheit der Darstellung und eine Kunst des Ausdrucks und Versmasses aufgeboten ist, dass diese Strophen zu dem Schönsten gehören, was Schiller gedichtet hat."

Bulthaupt[42] says of the "Braut von Messina": "sie ist voll Kraft und Leben, und wenn es überhaupt möglich wäre, unserem Theater den antiken Chor zurückzugewinnen, so wäre sie für diese Möglichkeit der beste Beweis gewesen." The chorus is, moreover, logically and consistently developed, and performs in the tragedy the office Schiller claims it should. And yet this tragedy served only to bring the chorus again to the fore and to prove once and for all the impossibility of making it a part of dramatic technic.[43] Schiller's prefatory essay is itself not convincing. Of the four ways in which he claims the drama would be benefited by the introduction of the chorus, all would not be accepted as advantageous, and in the case of each the same effect could be secured without the chorus. That the chorus does elevate the diction of the drama is, of course, indisputable; but Schiller's

[41] Quoted from Bellermann, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 82.
[42] *Dramaturgie des Schauspiels*, Leipzig, 1898, Vol. I, p. 398.
[43] Schiller, of course, never intended that the introduction of the chorus should be an advance in the development of German tragedy, but merely an experiment in the antique form. Cf. *supra*, p. 65.

own dramas are sufficient proof of the possibility of maintaining a high poetic tone without a chorus. On the other hand, the poet who adopts the chorus is necessarily restricted in the selection of his subject, for in order that the "chorus may not appear as a disturbing element in the drama, the plot must be so transformed that it can be set back in that simple poetic form of life of which the chorus is the natural product."[44] This means that none save the simplest plot can be used, for such a transformation would be impossible in the case of the highly developed and highly concentrated action of the historical drama, such as "Wallenstein," "Wilhelm Tell," "Macbeth" or "Richard III." Nor is the naive poetic conception of life which the introduction of the chorus demands compatible with the realism of Ibsen's "Ghosts," Hauptmann's "Die Weber," "Vor Sonnenaufgang," or in fact any of our modern naturalistic dramas. The drama has always been a history of advance and development; the dramatist must deal with the problems of his own day and must use that dramatic form which best enables him to do so. Accordingly, any technical requirement that demands a return to the simple life of an age that is past would mean the sacrifice of the highest office of the drama.[45] This difficulty presented itself to Wilhelm von Humboldt. "Ich wünschte," he wrote,[46] "dass Sie mit den neuen Foderungen, die Sie, nach dem Gelingen dieses Stücks, mit Recht an sich machen können, bald wieder einen in sich schwereren, schon durch seinen Umfang mühsam zu bändigenden Stoff, wenn nicht einen wie 'Wallenstein,' doch wie die 'Jungfrau' behandelten." A great part of the public,

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[44] Cf. *Über den Gebrauch des Chors in der Tragödie*, p. 127.

[45] Freytag claims that modern tragedy is composed of a main and a secondary action. These actions, which he designates as "Spiel" and "Gegenspiel," are distinct or even hostile to each other throughout the development of the plot, but are united in the catastrophe. The antique tragedy, on the other hand, had a simple action which was entirely concerned with the fate of the hero. Consequently, the subordinate characters of the modern drama are able to express perfectly that which was expressed in the antique tragedy by the chorus. Cf. *Die Technik des Dramas*, Leipzig, 1890, pp. 91–99.

[46] Letter to Schiller, October 22, 1803, *op. cit.*, p. 312.

he continues, would prefer the "Jungfrau von Orleans" to
the "Braut von Messina" "weil sie, neben der künstlerischen
Wirkung, auch einer durch ihren blossen Stoff fähig sind."
Humboldt himself realized that, "zwischen der alten und
neuen Tragödie noch ein andrer Unterschied ist, als der der
blossen Kunstform. . . . Es versetzt das Gemüt in eine andere
Stimmung, wenn eine reichere Welt sich bewegt, und wenn
nicht bloss die grossen Partieen der Menschheit, wenn auch
feine Charakternüancen erscheinen." The chorus purifies
the tragedy by restricting the reflection to the lyric passages,[47]
and at the same time gives repose to the action by the senti-
ments it expresses in these passages. It is just this, how-
ever, that makes the chorus dramatically ineffective; for
the prominence of the lyric element inevitably results in lack
of action, and what the tragedy gains in repose by the presence
of the chorus it loses in dramatic reality. Moreover, the
lyrics frequently retard the action at vital points and thus
weaken the tragic tension. The greeting of the chorus[48]
when Isabella appears with her sons is too long for the dramatic
situation. In the last act[49] the lament of the first chorus is
psychologically impossible, for it is not natural that Isabella
should have to wait until the chorus has finished its dirge
before she is told of the death of her son. In spite of the
beauty of the lyric passage the needless pause destroys the
tragic effect. Reflection does play an important rôle in the mod-
ern psychological drama, but it must be scattered through
the play, it must follow spontaneously from the action or
event that prompted it.[50] What we object to is reflection
reserved for one necessary moment, reflection that seems to
retard the action merely to instruct or elevate. Besides, the

[47] Other dramatists have felt the need of separating the reflective element
from the rest of the drama. Cf. Hebbel, who in his "Tagebuch," June 28,
1844, complains that modern tragedy in giving up the chorus has lost an
intrinsic element in the attainment of tragic effect. He felt the need of an
agent by means of which the dramatist could express his own ideas
without putting them in the mouths of the actors.

[48] Ll. 255-293.   [49] Act IV, sc. 4.

[50] Cf. the use of the reflective element in Augustus Thomas' intensely
psychological play *As a Man Thinks*.

great poet is always able to develop the plot in such a way that the necessary reflection may be spoken by the actors;[51] and other means have also been found for relieving the painful tension of the tragic situation.[52]

Probably the greatest objection that can be brought against the chorus is the impossibility of having it on the stage during moments of intense feeling and strong psychological effect. This was recognized by the Greek poets whose dramas are not notably psychological, and this accounts for the removal of the chorus from the orchestra in the "Ajax" of Sophocles. Schiller himself does not bring the chorus on the stage during the scenes in which Isabella tells Don Manuel and Don Cesar of their sister,[53] nor the one in which Diego reports the disappearance of Beatrice.[54] The presence of the chorus when Isabella is endeavoring to conciliate her sons is esthetically ineffective and we sympathize with her when she says:

> "Wozu die fremde Schar, wenn eine Mutter
> Das Herz aufschliessen will vor ihren Kindern?"[55]

From the first there were practical difficulties of stage presentation. It was not advisable for the choral passages to be sung when the rest of the play was to be recited,[56] and it was also monotonous and unnatural for the lyrics to be declaimed by all.[57] It was, accordingly, necessary to divide them among five or six individuals.[58] But with these unavoidable changes, we lose the true effect of the chorus, for its intrinsic nature is destroyed.[59] The best criticism of the chorus is probably

[51] Cf. the use of monologues.

[52] Cf. Shakespeare's use of the comic element.

[53] Act II, sc. 5.   [54] Act II, sc. 6.   [55] Ll. 331-332

[56] Cf. letter of Körner to Schiller, February 28, 1803, *Briefwechsel zwischen Körner und Schiller*, p. 435.

[57] Schiller at first wished the chorus to be sung with musical accompaniment, but later gave up the idea. Cf. letter to Zelter, February 28, 1803. (*Schillers Briefe*, Vol. VII, p. 18).

[58] Cf. letter to Körner, February 6, 1803. (*Schillers Briefe*, Vol. VII, p. 10), "Es ist nichts nöthig, als dass ich den Chor, ohne an den Worten das geringste zu verändern, in 5 oder 6 Individuen auflöse." Cf. also, letter to Goethe, February 8, 1803. (Vol. VII, p. 11).

[59] Cf. letter to Körner, February 6, 1803. (*Schillers Briefe*, Vol. VII,

Schiller's own statement[60] with regard to the impossibility of presenting it properly on the modern stage. "Das tragische Dichterwerk wird erst durch die theatralische Vorstellung zu einem Ganzen; nur die Worte giebt der Dichter, Musik und Tanz müssen hinzukommen, sie zu beleben. Solange also dem Chor diese sinnlich mächtige Begleitung fehlt, solange wird er in der Ökonomie des Trauerspiels als ein Aussending, als ein fremdartiger Körper und als ein Aufenthalt erscheinen, der nur den Gang der Handlung unterbricht, der die Täuschung stört, der den Zuschauer erkältet." Thus, as Schiller himself points out, the essential difficulty with the chorus is that it lacks the vital characteristics of the Greek chorus, song and the sensuous appeal of rhythmic motion. To be sure there is left the appeal of beautiful poetry, but this poetry, which could neither be sung nor declaimed by the chorus as a whole, would have been more effective in the form of a monologue.[61]

A number of antique dramas with choruses followed in the wake of the "Braut von Messina," but none were of any importance.[62] In 1805, Joh. Aug. Apel wrote "Polyidos." This was followed in 1806 by "Die Aitolier," and in 1807 by "Kallirrhoë." In 1805 G. Ant. Fr. Ast wrote "Krösus," and in 1807 appeared the "Niobe" of Wilh. von Schütz. This was followed by "Graf und die Gräfin von Gleichen" in 1808.

But even in this period there were some who objected to the imitation of Greek tragedy. Both in the "Fragmente über die neuere deutsche Litteratur" and in the "Ideen zur Geschichte und Kritik der Poesie und bildenden Künste," 1794–96, Herder speaks forcefully against any attempt to re-

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p. 11), in which Schiller writes: "Sie (die Dresdner Schauspieler) sollen mir das Stück spielen, ohne nur zu wissen, dass sie den Chor der alten Tragödie auf die Bühne gebracht haben." This is true, for with the distribution of the choral odes among the individuals, there ceased to be a chorus.

[60] *Über den Gebrauch des Chors in der Tragödie*, p. 121.

[61] There is little difference between the lyrics of the *Braut von Messina* and the monologues of Shakespeare. In fact, a chorus could equally well have been introduced in *Hamlet* to reflect upon the enigma of life instead of having this in the form of a soliloquy spoken by the Prince of Denmark.

[62] Cf. Koberstein, *op. cit.*, Vol. V, p. 402.

produce the classic drama. "In Sprache und Sitten werden wir nie Griechen und Römer werden, wir wollen es auch nicht sein,"[63] is his reason for the impossibility of imitating any type of antique literature. Referring directly to the use of the chorus in the German drama, he says: "Bei den Griechen war die ganze Sprache Gesang; in die kleinsten Theile und Wortfügungen derselben, in die verschlungensten Gänge der poetischen Erzählung erstreckte sich die eben so verschlungene Kunst des Rhythmus und der Metrik."[64] This is apparent in all the tragic and comic choruses. But the German language "ist zu philosophisch altklug, zu eingeschränkt unter Gesetze und nicht zu den Sylbenmassen des Pindars und der Chöre vieltrittig genug."[65] Herder considered merely the emotional aspect of the chorus.[66] To him the choral ode was the expression of the emotions and its sole function was to furnish music for the Greek drama[67] which was sung throughout. Accordingly, when the drama ceased to be sung, the chorus lost all excuse for existence.

But in spite of his strong objections to the imitation of the classic dramas, Herder himself wrote plays upon Greek subjects in which he introduced the chorus.[68] In the preface to "Admetus Haus" (1803) Herder's son describes the play as an attempt to reproduce the Greek drama. "Die hohe Einfalt," he writes, "des griechischen Drama, der tiefe Sinn des griechischen Chors schwebte ihm (Herder) vor Augen, und sofort ist 'Admetus Haus,' wie dessen frühere Schwestern, Ariadne und der entfesselte Prometheus, Versuch das griechische Drama auf deutschen Boden zu verpflanzen." Herder's plays have, however, little significance in the development of the German drama, for they are little more than paraphrases of the Greek originals.

The nineteenth century ushered in the Romantic period, and the Greek poets were forgotten in enthusiasm for the

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[63] *Sämmtliche Werke*, Stuttgart, 1853, Vol. XXIV, p. 318.
[64] *Ibid.*, Vol. XXI, p. 390.   [65] *Ibid.*, Vol. XVIII, p. 247.
[66] "Bei den Griechen war die lyrische Poesie nichts anders als ein Schwung der Empfindung durch mancherlei Töne." *Ibid.*, Vol. XXII, p. 10.
[67] "Der Chor war allein für die Musik eingerichtet." *Ibid.*, Vol. XXII, p. 197.   [68] *Ibid.*, Vol. XV, pp. 93–204.

Middle Ages. In this period only a few experiments with
the antique chorus are found. The Schlegel brothers, both
of whom were classical scholars, made unsuccessful attempts to
imitate Greek tragedy; Aug. W. Schlegel in his "Ion" based
upon the "Ion" of Euripides, and his brother in "Alarcos."
There is no chorus in "Ion," but in Act II, sc. I, the song
sung by Ion is in the form of the Greek choral ode with Strophe,
Gegenstrophe and Nachlass. In 1826 the satiric comedies of
Graf von Platen appeared. They are skilful imitations of the
Aristophanean comedies, with choruses in the manner of the
Old Greek Comedy. "Die verhängnissvolle Gabel" was
directed against the writers of the fate-tragedies, while "Der
romantische Oedipus" (1827), in which there is a chorus of
sheep, was an attack upon Immermann.

Finally in 1827 came that magnificent union of the Classic
and the Romantic, the Helena episode in the second part of
"Faust." Goethe wished the first part to be performed as a
tragedy and the second as an opera;[69] intending thus to bring
the dignity and calm of classicism into sharp contrast with
the reckless unrestraint of romanticism. The third act opens
as Helena, accompanied by a chorus of captive Trojan maidens,
stands before the palace of Menelaus in Sparta. Although
Goethe does not follow the classical technic in all its details,
the first part, as far as l. 9181,[70] is written entirely in the spirit
of a Greek tragedy. The severely classical character of the
interlude ceases, however, with the entrance of Faust, and for
the remainder of the scene the antique and the medieval are
represented side by side. In the second part the scene is laid
in Arcadia and the action is romantic throughout.

Goethe follows Aeschylus closely in his treatment of the
chorus. To a slight degree the influence of Sophocles is also
apparent. The chorus is on the stage throughout the whole
act. It takes an active part in the dialogue and is an import-
ant factor in the development of the action. The choral odes
are either closely related to the dialogue, or are in the nature

[69] Cf. Eckermann, *Gespräche mit Goethe*, January 29, 1827. Edited by
Biedermann, Leipzig, 1890, Vol. VI, p. 38.

[70] Goethe's *Faust*, edited by C. Thomas, Boston, 1905, Part II.

of comment upon the events that are taking place. Three of the odes are addressed directly to Phorkyas. In the second ode,[71] after the chorus has described the burning of Troy, it turns to Phorkyas with the question: "Welche von Phorkys Töchtern nur bist du?"[72] and for the remainder of the ode speaks directly to her. After Helena swoons, the chorus addresses the ode beginning, "Schweige, schweige!"[73] to Phorkyas, as it also does the ode on Hermes.[74] The character of the chorus does not change with the transference of the scene to the medieval castle of Faust. Even in the second part where the action is represented as taking place in Arcadia, its antique nature is retained for a short time.[75] The ode in which the chorus describes the cleverness of the child Hermes, when Phorkyas tells them of the birth of Euphorion, is splendid in its closeness to the spirit of the Sophoclean choral songs.

Goethe's conception of the third act naturally affected his treatment of the chorus. He intended that Euphorion should "express, in his very personality, the infectious spell of song,"[76] and that this might be most effectively carried out, the action from his appearance to his death had to be cast in the form of opera. The antique elements, accordingly, disappear entirely, "for music, as 'art of the infinite,' . . . is pre-eminently *the* romantic art."[77] In the first part, the Trojan maidens are giddy, thoughtless and fearful of danger, reminding us of the chorus of maidens in the "Seven against Thebes." These characteristics they retain, but after the appearance of Euphorion, they no longer speak in antique meter. They sing instead choral odes in the rimed stanzas that Goethe makes symbolic of romantic poetry. They sing and dance with Euphorion and the stately antique chorus becomes for a time the gay bright chorus of the opera. At first their song is one of gladness, but when they see Euphorion climbing

[71] Ll. 8697–8754. Goethe was influenced by Virgil's description of the burning of Troy. (Aen. Bk. 2, ll. 310 ff.) in the writing of this ode.
[72] Ll. 8728–8729.   [73] Ll. 8882–8908.
[74] Ll. 9629–9678.   [75] Until l. 9678.
[76] C. Thomas, *op, cit.*, Introduction to Faust, Part II, p. xxiv.
[77] *Ibid.*

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higher and higher with ever-increasing danger to himself, their joy gives way to anxiety, and as he suddenly falls at the feet of Helena and Faust, their song becomes a lament (Goethe's beautiful tribute to the memory of Lord Byron). Goethe himself realized the abrupt change in the character of the chorus at this point. "Der Chor," he said to Eckermann,[78] "fällt bei dem Trauergesang ganz aus der Rolle. Er ist früher und durchgehends antik gehalten oder verleugnet doch nie seine Mädchennatur, hier aber wird er mit einem Mal ernst und hoch reflectirend und spricht Dinge aus, woran er nie gedacht hat und auch nie hat denken können."

After the death of Euphorion the chorus resumes its antique character. The leader Panthalis follows Helena back to Orcus, but the other Trojan maidens, not wishing to return to the realm of shades, prefer to give up their own individuality and become identified with nature's elements. The lyric passages (except those in the Euphorion scene) are in antique meter, such as the anapestic, choriambic and glyconic, for Goethe did not attempt to imitate the strict metrical form. "His principle was to reproduce the *effect* of the Greek measure, but to avoid metrical pedantry in adapting it to the German language."[79]

With the era of Romanticism the history of the chorus in the spoken drama comes to an end.[80] The attempts of Schiller and Goethe to vitalize the chorus had not been successful. What the great poets could not accomplish was beyond the power of their less gifted successors, and the chorus was, accordingly, disregarded entirely. The creative writers made no further effort to use it, and the theorists and philosophers in discussing its significance referred to it as an art-form that had outgrown its need and had passed away. A few years

[78] July 5, 1827. Cf. Biedermann, *op. cit.*, Vol. VI, p. 153.

[79] C. Thomas, *op. cit.*, Notes to Faust, Part II, p. 410.

[80] The only case, to my knowledge, in contemporary drama, in which there is even a suggestion of the classic chorus, is the *Ödipus und die Sphinx* by Hugo von Hofmannsthal. In this play he introduces "die Stimmen der Ahnen," spirits that are not seen, but which comment upon the action, and thus to a certain extent perform the function of the old chorus.

after the appearance of the "Braut von Messina,"[81] August W. Schlegel, in referring to the attempts to use the chorus in the modern drama, said:[82] "Neuere Dichter, und zwar vom ersten Range, haben häufig versucht, den Chor in ihren Stücken anzubringen, meistens ohne einen rechten, und besonders ohne einen lebendigen Begriff von seiner Bestimmung. Aber wir haben keinen angemessenen Gesang und Tanz, wir haben auch bei der Verfassung unserer Bühne keinen schicklichen Platz für ihn, und es wird daher schwerlich gelingen, ihn je einheimisch unter uns zu machen. Überhaupt möchte wohl die griechische Tragödie in ganz unveränderter Gestalt für unsre heutigen Theater immer eine ausländische Pflanze bleiben, der man kaum im Treibhause gelehrter Kunstübung einiges Gedeihen versprechen darf. Der Stoff der alten Tragödie, die griechische Mythologie, ist der Denkart und Einbildungskraft der meisten Zuschauer eben so fremd, als deren Form und theatralische Darstellungsweise. Einen ganz andern Stoff, aber, z. B. einen historischen in jene Form zwängen zu wollen, ist ein misslicher Versuch."

Hegel[83] also discusses the question of whether the chorus should be used in modern tragedy. Many dramatists have felt the need, he says, of "solch einer substantiellen Grundlage," but have been unsuccessful in their attempts to use it, because they have never understood the essential significance of the chorus in Greek tragedy. To Hegel the chorus was "das substantielle höhere, von falschen Konflikten abmahnende, den Ausgang bedenkende Bewusstsein." ". . . er ist die wirkliche Substanz des sittlichen heroischen Lebens und Handelns selbst, den einzelnen Heroen gegenüber das Volk als das fruchtbare Erdreich, aus welchem die Individuen, wie die Blumen und hervorragenden Bäume aus ihrem eigenen heimischen Boden, emporwachsen, und durch die Existenz desselben bedingt sind." The chorus has no part in the action,

[81] The exact date in 1808.
[82] *Vorlesungen über dramatische Kunst und Litteratur*, edited by E. Böcking, Leipzig, 1846, Vol. V. Part I, pp. 78–79.
[83] *Werke*, Vol. X, Part 3, pp. 547 ff. (Vollständige Ausgabe durch einen Verein von Freunden des Verewigten, Berlin, 1838.)

"sondern spricht nur theoretisch sein Urtheil." The chorus was an essential part of Greek tragedy; "wie das Theater selbst seinen äussern Boden, seine Scene und Umgebung hat, so ist der Chor, das Volk, gleichsam die geistige Scene." Modern tragedy, however, does not need the chorus, "da ihre Handlungen nicht auf diesem substantiellen Grunde, sondern auf dem subjektiven Willen und Charakter, sowie auf dem scheinbar äusserlichen Zufall der Begebenheiten und Umstände beruhn." In Greek tragedy "der Chor gehört wesentlich zur dramatischen Handlung." But it is not a vital part of the modern drama and "überhaupt kann er da nicht seine rechte Stelle finden, wo es sich um partikulare Leidenschaften, Zwecke und Charaktere handelt, oder die Intrigue ihr Spiel zu treiben hat."[84]

The chorus had, however, not entirely passed away. It would indeed be strange if the efforts of centuries were to cease without any solution of the problem. The chorus in the spoken drama had failed, and yet there are in this drama hints of the solution that was eventually to come from another direction. The lyric monologues in "Wallenstein," "Maria Stuart," "Iphigenie" and "Faust," all of which reflect the tendency to enlist the power of music, or at least of the lyric element, to increase the effect of the spoken drama,[85] point to the fact that the dramatists of the classic period were looking forward to a new art-form in which music should have a necessary part. In fact, many poets, as Lessing,[86] Goethe and Schiller, felt that the ideal of the drama was to be found in the opera. Although it was impossible for the choral passages of the "Braut von Messina" to be sung when the rest of the drama was declaimed, Schiller seems to have had a premonition of the final solution of the dramatic problem, when he wrote:[87]

[84] *Ibid.*, p. 550.

[85] The writers of the recent symbolic dramas felt the power of the lyric element and introduced songs into their plays. Cf. G. Hauptmann, *Die versunkene Glocke, Hanneles Himmelfahrt.* Also, H. Sudermann, *Die drei Reiherfedern.*

[86] Cf. R. Wagner, *Zukunftsmusik (Gesammelte Schriften und Dichtungen,* Leipzig, 1873, Vol. VII, p. 140).

[87] Cf. Letter to Goethe, December 29, 1797. (*Schillers Briefe*, Vol. V, p. 313.)

"Ich hatte immer ein gewisses Vertrauen zur Oper, dass aus ihr wie aus den Chören des alten Bacchusfestes das Trauerspiel in einer edlern Gestalt sich loswickeln sollte." In practice Goethe went even further than Schiller, for the second part of the Helena episode is partly in operatic form.

These men were, however, poets and not musicians. For that reason they could not put their theories into practice, and it was not until the middle of the nineteenth century that the problem was solved by the dramatist and composer, Richard Wagner.[88] He realized that the highest development of the drama could not be found in the opera as it existed at that time,[89] for the opera had become a purely musical creation in which the dramatic action had little significance beyond that of connecting the various vocal selections.[90] A study of Greek tragedy, in which both the music and the dance were

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[88] Cf. *Zukunftsmusik.*

[89] It is interesting to note that Herder foreshadows the reform of the opera later undertaken by R. Wagner, and the rise of the music drama. He says: "Der Fortgang des Jahrhunderts wird uns auf einen Mann führen, der, diesen Trödelkram wortloser Töne verachtend, die Notwendigkeit einer innigen Verknüpfung reinmenschlicher Empfindung und der Fabel selbst mit seinen Tönen einsah. Von jener Herrscherhöhe, auf welcher sich der gemeine Musikus brüstet, dass die Poesie seiner Kunst *diene*, stieg er hinab und liess, soweit es der Geschmack der Nation, für die er in Tönen dichtete, zuliess, den Worten der Empfindung, der Handlung selbst seine Töne nur dienen. Dass er nämlich die ganze Bude des zerschnittenen und zerfetzten Opern-Klingklangs umwerfe, und ein *Odeum* aufrichte, ein zusammenhängend lyrisches Gebäude, in welchem Poesie, Musik, Action, Decoration Eins sind." (*Werke*, Vol. XXI, p. 390.)

[90] Opera was the outcome of an attempt on the part of the Italian scholars of the sixteenth century to revive Greek tragedy. (Cf. Baltzell, *History of Music*, Philadelphia, 1910, p. 177.) But in spite of its literary origin, the development of the Italian opera and of the German, which was closely modeled upon the Italian, brought the purely musical element to the fore; the dramatic significance was entirely obscured and the opera became a puppet-show for the display of vocal art. (Cf. Baltzell, *op. cit.*, p. 215.) Because of the purely musical development of the opera in Germany, it does not seem necessary to discuss in this essay the chorus in the opera. Wagner, however, by going back to the original conception of opera as a drama, appears as the creator of a new art construction, the lyric drama, and must accordingly, be considered as a dramatist rather than as an operatic composer.

subservient to the poetry,[91] suggested to his mind the possibility of an art-work in which the drama should be of paramount importance and should of itself form a complete whole, and in which the music should be, as it were, a flexible and unceasing current accompanying and at the same time intensifying and interpreting the meaning of the words.[92] In such a drama, in which music is employed to increase the effect of the dramatic action, the "poet's message will be conveyed directly to the feelings as emotion and not to the understanding as thought." Consequently, the deepest and the most profound truths will, Wagner claims, produce so irresistible and so convincing an impression at the moment of the stage performance that all reflective criticism will become unnecessary.[93] And to Wagner's mind "the ideal art-form is that which can be grasped without a shadow of reflection and through which the poet's lesson can be most clearly conveyed to the unimpeded feeling."[94]

A presentation of this ideal or music-drama is rendered possible by the orchestra as elaborated and developed by Beethoven. The rôle played by the orchestra is much the same as that played by the chorus in the Greek tragedy.[95] A comparison of the antique chorus of human beings and the modern orchestra of stringed instruments may, at first sight, appear impossible. The purely human significance of the chorus was, however, entirely disregarded by Wagner.[96] He was concerned merely with the ideal aspect of the chorus; and since the chorus, in its ideal aspect, is "not an individual but a universal conception,"[97] it may, logically, be as well repre-

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[91] Cf. *supra*, p. 5.

[92] This new creation he called the music-drama in distinction from the opera. Cf. *Zukunftsmusik*, p. 179.

[93] *Ibid.*, pp. 124–125.   [94] *Ibid.*, p. 172.   [95] *Ibid.*, pp. 172–173.

[96] The Sophoclean chorus, it will be remembered, had a dual character. In the dialogue it represented the ordinary mass of human beings as opposed to the heroic figures upon the stage; and in the choral odes it had an ideal character and became, as it were, the mouthpiece of the poet. It is the ideal and not the human aspect of the chorus that is represented by Wagner's orchestra.

[97] Cf. Schiller, *Über den Gebrauch des Chors in der Tragödie*, p. 129.

sented by the orchestra as by a group of individuals. At any rate the orchestra performs the essential function of the chorus; a function which, as Schiller rightly maintains, has never been given to any chorus since the decline of the antique tragedy, that of a "single ideal person, furthering and accompanying the whole plot."[98] Like the Greek chorus, the orchestra is always present and has its position off the stage,[99] and like the Greek chorus it follows the events upon the stage with keen interest. The orchestra also serves to direct the feelings, for by means of the "Leitmotiv"[100] the music is able to reflect everything that takes place upon the stage; the slightest alteration of scenic effect, the slightest change of mood, in fact, every phase in the psychological development of the action has its orchestral response, and, as did the old chorus, the orchestra is thus enabled to furnish a continuous comment upon the action; for, "although music cannot think, the 'Leitmotiv' can produce a definite impression upon the feelings and incite them to a function akin to thought."[101] Thus the "ideal interest of the chorus in the action passes completely to the orchestra and is there manifested in continual but never troubling presence."[102]

But if the ideal aspect of the chorus is assumed by the orchestra, what then becomes of the old Greek chorus that had been taken over into the opera by the Italian musicians of the sixteenth century? This chorus went the way of the opera and soon came to have practically no significance beyond that of a group of singers. When in the nineteenth century Wagner undertook his reform of the opera, the chorus occupied an important place upon the operatic stage. But it had entirely lost the significance of its antique prototype and, since there was no room in the economy of the lyric drama for characters

[98] *Ibid.*, p. 131.

[99] Cf. *Zukunftsmusik*, p. 172.

[100] The "Leitmotiv" is a definite musical phrase associated with each important character or event in the drama, and can be used to call to mind the idea which it represents at any time during the course of the action.

[101] Cf. R. Wagner, *Oper und Drama*, Vol. IV, p. 231.

[102] Cf. *Zukunftsmusik*, p. 173.

that had no part in the development of the action, it was banished save as an active personage in the plot, and in the Wagnerian dramas it appears on the stage only when its presence as such is required: as chorus of maidens in "Parzival," chorus of Walkyrs in "Die Walküre," or the chorus of pilgrims in "Tannhäuser."

The orchestra has, however, a far more vital and more essential duty than that of reflecting the lyric and dramatic elements of the action. It has an important share in the psychological development of the plot. In this rôle it accompanies the dramatic action; and whenever the action itself is not fully intelligible it conveys to the feelings the full significance of that action and thus takes the place of thought.[103] Thus, "while the orchestra as the harmonic carrier of the verse-melody alone confers upon the melody its definite expression, it, at the same time, keeps the melody in the requisite unceasing flow and thus convincingly impresses the inner motives of the dramatic action upon the feelings."[104] This is Wagner's "endless melody." The orchestra by unceasingly supporting and explaining the action, has an unbroken share in the dramatic action and succeeds in uniting the poetry and the music into one complete whole.

The antique chorus appealed primarily to the intellect, for the lyric portions of the Greek drama contained the profoundest thoughts of the whole composition; but it also appealed to the emotions through music and the rhythmic movements of the dance. "The modern orchestra has, however, assumed merely the emotional significance of the old chorus."[105] The antique chorus by its meditations lifts the mind above the confusion and turmoil of passing events to a contemplation of the great truths which the drama seeks to teach and thus, through thought, appeals to the understanding; whereas the orchestra by supplying the musical accompaniment for the words, and guiding the feelings along definite lines, conveys the teaching of the drama directly to the listener's emotions and itself takes the place of thought.

[103] Cf. *Oper und Drama*, p. 222. [104] *Zukunftsmusik*, p. 172.
[105] *Oper und Drama*, p. 238.

This, then, is the final solution of the problem. For here and here only, when the chorus finds its proper medium of expression; when all the sensuous charm of the orchestration is employed for the express purpose of intensifying the dramatic emotion, does the chorus most nearly approach its ancient prototype and truly come to its own.

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INDEX OF PROPER NAMES

This index is limited to the names of those writers who either used the chorus themselves or referred to its significance in the German drama.

VITA

The writer of this dissertation was born in New Rochelle, New York, June 16, 1886. She received her early education in the public schools of that city, entering New Rochelle High School in 1900. In 1904 she matriculated at Barnard College, and was graduated in 1908. In the following year she began graduate work at Columbia University, receiving the degree of A.M. in 1909. Since that time she has continued work for the degree of Ph.D. in the Germanic and the Classical Departments.